

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**March 30, 1983**

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. SVEINSON:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you today, and through you to the Assembly, the grade 8 class from Centennial School in my constituency. They are accompanied by Mr. Forrest, their teacher, and Mr. Adams — Mr. Adam, I'm sorry — a university involvement student. I was recently in attendance at the opening of their new facility, and I will say it's the envy of every school board, every student and every teacher in the province. I just wish you a safe trip back to school and I hope you've had an interesting stay in the legislature today.

Thank you very much.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BOUTIN:** — Mr. Speaker, I too would also like to introduce to you and through you to this Legislative Assembly, a school from Birch Hills. It consists of 27 students and their teachers, Grant Getz and Art Enns, from the Kinistino constituency. I also would like to meet with them at 3 o'clock for pictures in the rotunda and for refreshments in members' lounge. I'd like the House to join me to welcome them to this legislature.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WEIMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you, 31 very well-behaved and inquisitive students from that fine elementary school in Saskatoon Fairview, Vincent Massey School, grade 8 students. They are chaperoned by Iris Cogger and Lorne Hustak. I also will be more than proud to meet with you at 3 o'clock for pictures in the rotunda and refreshments after. And I might caution the grade 8 students (by the way, they are seated in the west gallery) that do not live up to that expectation of well-behaved, you will all be staying in after recess. I would ask the Assembly to please join with me to welcoming my students.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to welcome a group of students in the Speaker's gallery — 35 students from the Rosthern High School. One of the members of this House, Myles Morin, is a graduate of that school, and both he and myself will be meeting with them later. Wish you a good trip home.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS**

**Budget Cuts in Health Care**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Health. Referring to the speech of the Minister of Finance in referring to the health budget, the speech refers to the fact that the government takes pride in the improvements we are implementing in this budget and are planning for the future. I noted, Mr. Minister, that there are improvements. The administration budget is increased, and the personnel recruitment and training personnel complement is increased, but I noticed that there are sharp cuts in psychiatric services — North Battleford hospital, the psychiatric service at, centre at Weyburn, and the psychiatric centre at Yorkton — totalling approximately 30 employees. The question I direct to the minister is: are these people who are receiving services from the psychiatric services branch a group of people not thought to be important by this government?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — Well, I, Mr. Speaker, first would like to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that, in mentioning some of the things that my colleague brought out yesterday in the throne speech, I think he overlooked the massive amount of money that we're putting into the treatment of cancer, and I think that's pretty popular, and that's looking after people in Saskatchewan.

Also, I think he forgot about the paediatric intensive care, the children's rehab centre. Mr. Speaker, I know question period is only half an hour, but I could take it all up to tell you the many good things that we're doing in the Department of Health under this budget.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — But I think your question was dealing with the psychiatric department, psychiatric services, and I realize you're quoting from the article in the *Leader-Post*. I wish you would have looked at the rest of it, but that's just fine. Read the rest of it when you have time. But in regard to the psychiatric services branch, certainly the people who are receiving psychiatric services in this province are no lesser individuals than anyone else in this province, and there are . . . As there are some deletions of positions in the budget, there are also many expansions, and I can assure you that the people who are receiving psychiatric service will continue to receive improved psychiatric service under this government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It, it may well be that the psych services are not popular and accordingly are cut. My supplementary question is, directs its attention to the Saskatchewan dental care plan where there has been a cut in staff of 23 people. Is this program not popular, and is that why you have cut that program? And if not, why have you cut the dental care program and the services offered to young people?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — We have not cut the dental care program as a service of young people. We are not expanding it to the 17-year age group, and we are able to delete some positions, but the service to the people of Saskatchewan will still continue, as it has before, and I can assure you once again: bear with us, hold in tight, 'cause you're going to see a lot of improvements in health.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### **Grants to Day Cares**

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Social Services. In listening patiently yesterday, as she tried to explain her government's position to a group of irate women who have been attempting to deal with this government, she mentioned that she did have concern and compassion for the problems facing individuals in these tough economic times. But in light of the fact of all these statements, I would like to ask her why, in checking the day care grants, you have seen fit to cut grants to day cares by 43 per cent in last night's budget.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Speaker, my figures show an 11 per cent increase on the day care figures in the budget.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister, is she saying that there is an 11 per cent increase to day care centres in this budget?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — There is an 11 per cent increase, and it is specifically to the level of subsidies.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Could the minister tell me what the increase is to day care centres in the province of Saskatchewan in last night's budget?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Speaker, the increase is at the subsidy level. There is no increase on new spaces. We went into that in February to do with the vacancies, no vacancies, etc. The 11 per cent increase is in the anticipation of an uptake on the number of people coming in to the present centres, and also the level of subsidy.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The numbers that . . . The numbers that will mean something to the people in the day care system are numbers like: '82-83, social services grant to day care, \$966,000; grants to day cares in DNS, \$572,000; for a total of \$1.5 million in 1982-83. This year there is no money in DNS and the total in social services is \$1 million, a cut of 43 per cent in grants to day care centres in the province. I would like to know how you square that with the women and families of this province who were expecting an increase in the day care centres.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Speaker, we have not cut the number of centres that are there. We have not increased the number of centres. As I stated some months ago, one of my goals in the, in the downturn of the economy would be to maintain a level of service that is there. And I suggest to you that is what this budget has done for day care in this province in a very tough year. And I suggest to you that that does show a commitment to the, particularly the single mothers that are there.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### **Social Services Staff Cuts**

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Minister of Social Services. I have here an article from the *Leader-Post* which is headlined 'P.A. Welfare Workers Face Rising Case-loads.' This article was written in October of 1982, and since then, everyone will know that the welfare caseload in the province has increased dramatically. What I would like to know is how you justified the cut of 21 staff in regional operations when care-loads in fact are going up.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, the member from Shaunavon is making the assumption that those positions are all social workers; those positions are not all social workers. There is an overall reduction of 31 out of a figure of 21 . . . 2,800. I suggest that's not too bad in terms of the economic condition. We have, we have looked at the possibility of redeployment of certain administrative positions to the field level; and we have also unfrozen some social work positions in the field.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister says that they are not social workers, but in the budget, page 86, regional operations, there is a decrease of 21 positions in regional services at a time when the caseload, by everyone's understanding, has increased by at least 50 or 60 per cent since this time last year. And all I would like to know is how you expect the social workers to take care of the families and the children of those families who, who are facing ever-increasing situations where children are being abused. How do you expect them to do it?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Speaker, the social workers of this province have very capably managed. And I'm the first to agree, not without a degree of stress, because the caseloads have gone up indeed. And they have worked very well under that. As I stated, we have unfrozen some positions, recognizing the continuing rise of the caseload. Along with that, we redeployed some positions from the administrative level, the office level, to the field level.

### **Funding for Universities**

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Continuing Education in respect to the budget on advanced education and manpower. The other day . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — The other day he refused to answer because he hadn't been appointed. I, I suspect today he will be in a position to, to answer. The question that I address to you, Mr. Minister, is that in your budget for the operating grants to the universities you have made a grant increase of 7 per cent, and I say that is a miserable increase, in contrast with the province of Manitoba, which recently brought in a budget with a 10.3 per cent increase. My question to you, Mr. Minister, is: how do you justify such a small increase in the operating grants to the university in a time with increasing enrolments?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that I wouldn't care to give 25 per cent, perhaps, if it was my personal preference, and if economic conditions were that good; and things were that buoyant. I'd be all in favour of 25, 35 per cent, but it seems to me . . . I, I'm very sorry and I apologize to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of this House, I was unable to be here for the budget speech. I was busy opening up a school and . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — I, I did have the opportunity of listening to the Leader of the Opposition, and I found a little difficult to believe my ears, to believe that what I was hearing was really coming off, because I heard something about piling and compounding of, of dollar bills and \$10 bills, and I was kind of sorry that I wasn't there because I might have picked up a few of those dollar bills for, for education. However, shortly thereafter, there was a little interruption in between Lloydminster and Lashburn

from power lines, but when we picked up the next thing that came from the Leader of the Opposition, it was in reference to . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I would ask the hon. member to come to the question. I believe he's wandering just a little.

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — My, my apologizes, Mr. Speaker. I don't get too many opportunities to speak in this House.

Now, I don't think it would be in order for me to ask the hon. member what the question was.

But in, in, in reply, I would point this out to the hon. member: that it is a time of recession, and we are experiencing a degree of recession as well as, as the rest of Canada and the rest of the world. So therefore, what we have to do, and I think it's incumbent upon me in my capacity as Minister of Education and Advanced Education, I think it's incumbent upon me to, to have some kind of a plan in mind. And, quite frankly, I think that what we were trying to do was to, to amass as much information through our officials and through working in consultation with other departments in regard to what the real needs were educationally in this province. And so, in taking a look at the total needs, we, we have come up with, I think, a pretty sound plan to, to satisfy the needs, and university is a part of that. But, I, I honestly do feel that there are other areas that we were, we should be expected to address ahead . . . which should have greater priority than the university at this particular time.

Having said that, in answer directly to your question, Mr. Speaker, compared to the rest of the province s in this country, I think, I think that we are, our universities are faring very, very well. In addition, we do have in mind a 10-year plan, something ahead, something for the future. I don't think it's a clutch and grab kind of a thing. It's, it's more in, in keeping with what the true educational needs, short-term and long-term, of this province should be.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I seldom take . . . I seldom take advantage of the supplementary, but I want to say that I'm glad that the minister still has something to do opening the schools which we built. But, Mr., . . . Mr. Minister, as a supplemental, do you not agree that with the 7 per cent income in operating grants to the universities, that this will necessarily result in a cut-back in programs offered to the students, with an increasing enrolment?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, we were very sensitive to the needs of the universities due to the fact that there has been a sudden escalation in enrolment; there's no question about that. We're also equally as sensitive to the needs of the technical institutes in this regard. Now, as far as the university is concerned, we have established a 7 per cent increase which is in keeping with the government guide-line. We are, as we always do in all areas, we are going to be monitoring the enrolment increase at the university level. As a matter of fact, I might mention, Mr. Speaker, that at the outset in, at the beginning of the school year this year, we detected that there was a severe problem at the technical institute level because there was underfunding, because we had in effect accepted what had been proposed by the previous government as the budget for technical education, and we saw that there was a shortfall, and I can recall . . . I'm answering your, I'm answering your question. I'm

talking about monitoring the situation, if you will listen. Please, please; I'm serious. I'm trying to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, but I'm trying to make . . . I'm trying to make an analogy.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order please, order. It would appear to me from both sides of the House, that there is a lack of attention being paid to the question that is being asked and to the answer that is being given. And I would ask the members to listen while he gives you an answer. I believe that the point he is raising is pertinent to the question.

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Excuse me. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker . . . Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The analogy I was making was simply that of monitoring the situation. And I remember having to go to one of the technical institutes, Kelsey, Kelsey, in particular, and I had to sit down with the administration, with the students, with the guidance counsellors and, and thoroughly investigate whether there . . . to what extent it was going to affect quality of education and services, essential services, to students. It became apparent to me that there, it, that definitely that quality was going to be affected. I went, cap in hand, to the Minister of Finance, to my colleagues in cabinet, and I'm very, very proud to say that our government put education at a very, very high, on a very high priority level, and we were able to come to the rescue of this, those students. So by monitoring, we're able to do this.

I am saying, I am saying, hon. member from Quill Lakes, that in effect we certainly are going to be monitoring the situation to ensure that there is quality education in this province.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, you are obviously aware that the university commission advised you, the government, that a 7.5 per cent . . . Even considering that, that the universities would be very substantially have to cut their programs, even if they received a 7.5. I ask you, Mr. Minister, are you denying the validity of the submission that was made by the university commission to you?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, no, I'm not denying the validity of anything that's handed by the universities commission. We consulted with the president of the universities, with the boards of governors, and, taking a look at the overall picture in education, that was a decision that our government made.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, are you prepared, are you prepared to support the adequacy of your funding to the universities by guaranteeing that there will be no major tuition fees placed upon the students — no increase?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think that it's right or proper for me to answer that question because that does not lie within the jurisdiction of our government. It really, it is in the hands of the board of governors of the university.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Minister, would you agree that if the funding by the government was substantial enough to meet the needs of the university, that indeed tuition fees would not likely have to be increased?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I would have to rate that as a hypothetical question and I'm not prepared to be able to answer that.

### **Funding For International Aid Projects**

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture. The downturn in the economy, as it has been called today, or the recession, has really not affected the compassion of the people of Saskatchewan. I am told that their giving towards international aid projects has increased to \$4 million and is projected at \$4 million. Can the minister tell me why they have cut their budget in half for funding for international aid projects?

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — I'm . . . I don't have that information at, at my disposal but perhaps the Attorney General might.

**HON. MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member . . . It is unfortunately one of the difficult decisions we had to make. We did make the decision to restrict the funding for education which . . . and the development within the province of Saskatchewan. We made that decision last year. Certainly we had to make some priority assessments and decisions. You will note that we did increase for economic development, an area where we believe that a high priority exists in the matter of native issues. It's simply one of the more difficult decisions we made to have a, what I think, a moderate cut-back compared to some of the other provinces.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Attorney General says it's a moderate cut-back. Cutting back from a \$2 million matching grant to \$1 million makes a difference whether there'll be \$8 million worth of work carried on in development projects or 4 million. Do you call that a moderate cut-back? By the difference between you spending \$1 million or \$2 million means a difference of 4 million or 8 million as it's matched by CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). So that is not . . . That's a multiplier effect there. And the recession hasn't affected the giving of the people of Saskatchewan. Their giving is up from last year.

**HON. MR. LANE:** — I think that the hon. member is, is correct only so far as it goes, in that much of the — no, I shouldn't say much — but a significant portion of the funding for international aid last, in the last budget was in fact not for international aid, but was for education and development within the province of Saskatchewan. And I caution the hon. member to, to check his figures. Because that is significantly correct and I believe it's, it's close to a quarter of a million dollars that was in fact spent within the province of Saskatchewan and not spent overseas in the Third World.

So the difference going to the Third World or lesser developed countries is not to the extent as stated by the hon. member.

### **Northern Development Strategy**

**MR. YEW:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. The people, the people of northern Saskatchewan were bitterly disappointed by your government's recent throne speech. Now, again last night, they again have been disappointed by your budget. It seems that under the Conservative government's administration Saskatchewan has shrunk in size, and you now simply ignore the northern half of the province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. YEW:** — My question is this, my question is this, Mr. Minister: how can you possibly justify the fact that your budget contains no plan, no strategy nor development program for people of northern Saskatchewan — no hope at all. Can, how can he justify that?

**HON. MR. MCLEOD:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm, the reaction that I've had from northern Saskatchewan this morning is that the people in northern Saskatchewan are not disappointed by what, what the budget holds for northern Saskatchewan. And the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I have several relatives there, as a matter of fact.

But I should point out to the hon. member, the, the grants to (over here), northern capital grant, grants program that's identified there is a, is a, is only one portion of the capital grants that will be provided to local communities in the North; the other coming, as the hon. member I believe will know, from the northern Saskatchewan revenue-sharing trust account that's there, and there will be a good deal of money allocated to northern local municipalities once we get the bill passed through this session. And the people in northern Saskatchewan are extremely happy about that in my report this morning, and I've talked to several of them.

**MR. YEW:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I noted in initial assessment of the budget that, that there have been cuts in terms of education, in terms of training and education, in terms of revenue-sharing to local governments — that it is down from the \$55.8 million that was formerly proposed by the former government. You still have not come out with any economic development strategy for northern Saskatchewan. And I ask the minister: when are you going to announce . . . Your departmental memo of July 17th stated that you will have self-sufficiency economic development package for the North. When are you going to make your announcement?

**HON. MR. MCLEOD:** — Well, the hon. member will know . . . He mentions training and education. I can say to him, and if you were listening carefully last night, my colleague who was on his feet for a good portion of this question period mentioned — and it was mentioned by the Minister of Finance last night — training and education is up significantly. Northern Saskatchewan will be, the people of northern Saskatchewan will be major beneficiaries of that program — major beneficiaries of the training and development training. And development of training and retraining for people in northern Saskatchewan will have to be, as the hon. member will surely admit, will have to be the major component of economic development over the long term in northern Saskatchewan, as it must be for the whole of Saskatchewan.

I would remind you, once again, the position taken by this government, which has been well accepted by most people in northern Saskatchewan, not be a few spokesmen there who consider themselves spokesmen for other people who don't want to be spoken for . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. MCLEOD:** — Most people in northern Saskatchewan have accepted very well that they are now a part of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!



## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Awarding of SPC Contracts

**HON. MR. MCLAREN:** — Mr. Speaker, in keeping with my colleague's text last night in the budget speech, the Minister of Finance, I would like to bring to your attention today and to the attention of the members of this legislature, ways and means in which the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, being the capital-intensive industry that it is, is attempting to create both direct and indirect employment for the citizens of this province, by means of awarding certain contracts.

By awarding Saskatchewan Power Corporation contracts to industries within this province, we look after the needs of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, while also stimulating the Saskatchewan economy. We have recently awarded 21 million in contracts to Saskatchewan-based enterprise. These contracts will generate more than 117,000 man-hours of employment for Saskatchewan people, people involved in manufacturing such things as transformer switches, steel and cable.

The following are these contracts: Federal Pioneer in Regina: \$4 million for 82,000 man-hours; Federated Co-op, Saskatoon: \$4.6 million, 6,000 man-hours; Gulf Canada, Regina: \$709,000, 900 man-hours; Prairie Industrial Chemicals, Saskatoon: \$400,000, 1,800 man-hours; Canada Wire and Cable Company, Regina: \$1,820,000 for 4,400 man-hours; Ipsco: \$1.3 million, 16,000 man-hours; Inventronics, Moose Jaw: \$35,000, 6,000 man-hours.

Mr. Speaker, we estimate that the Saskatchewan rural gas program will provide up to 400 jobs per year in the private sector, with over 550,000 man-hours of employment this year.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. MCLAREN:** — We have now completed our employment estimates for 1982-83 through 1986, for the Nipawin hydroelectric project. The estimates are based upon employees of the main civil contractor, as well as other contractors on the site. The main contractor for 1983 — 950 jobs; 1984 — 700 jobs; 1985 — 275 jobs; 1986 — 10. Other contractors: 215 jobs in 1983; 2501 in 1984; 300 in 1985; 114 in 1986. This totals 1,165 jobs in 1983; 950 in 1984; 575 in 1985; 125 in 1986. These figures are average manpower for the summer months of the construction season.

Mr. Speaker, I think I believe that you will agree, and members of the House will agree, that Saskatchewan Power Corporation is doing its part to stimulate the economy of the province of Saskatchewan, and by doing that, creating many man-hours of employment for the citizens of our province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to add a few words to the, to those of the minister of charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. He has announced to this House in a ministerial statement that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation is buying its steel from Ipsco. I would have thought that that might have been presumed without a ministerial statement. I know of no time when that was not true. He has announced that petroleum is being purchased from, from Federated Co-operatives and that wire and cable is being purchased from Canada Wire and Cable. These same

things have been going on for 10 or 15 years or more. I'm happy that the minister has stumbled onto this information and is advising the House to that effect.

I am pleased that these policies are being continued. I do not think that they will add anything to the, to the employment picture in Saskatchewan that hasn't been there for many, many years in the past. The point that the minister makes, however, is a valid point. He makes the point that government spending can create employment, and that active creation of solid assets by government agencies can create employment. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Highways who was so unsuccessful in convincing his colleagues to the same effect, and I'm sorry to see that a highway capital budget . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I believe the hon. member is straying away from the topic that is before us.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I will, I will revert to the comments of the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, compliment him on running an active construction program which is providing employment for Saskatchewan employees, and deeply regret the fact that so few of his ministerial colleagues are following the same example with the result that there are thousands of people unemployed in this province who could be employed, creating solid assets for us all.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **MOTIONS**

#### **Resolution No. 4 — Disposal of Toxic Chemical Containers**

**MR. TUSA:** — Mr. Speaker, the problems connected with chemical-can disposal are very clear to many people throughout this province. In fact, over 95 identifiable groups in Saskatchewan have expressed their concerns about the number of pesticide containers being left in municipal land-fill sites, sloughs, ditches or farmyard sheds.

Mr. Speaker, since assuming office, our government has received resolutions from various rural municipalities, health boards, agricultural representative boards, town and city councils, SARM, SUMA, and the Saskatchewan Safety Council to develop a program to collect these containers. These groups are concerned with the unsatisfactory practices being used for the disposal of pesticide containers. When they find many of these containers lying in sloughs, gullies, and waste-disposal areas, they don't like what they see. They realize these practices, besides being unsightly, also represent a risk to the quality of surface and ground water. It is indeed a serious problem, and one that demands immediate attention.

Mr. Speaker, the former administration had addressed this situation by announcing that they would establish a task force to identify the problem. Our government is taking direct action to solve the problem, instead of delaying the solution by appointing a task force.

Mr. Speaker, one million chemical containers enter Saskatchewan every year, yet the former government failed to set up a viable program for the proper disposal of these containers. Alberta has 600,000 containers brought in annually and has had a program in place for four years.

Mr. Speaker, we are not going to sit around for over 10 years and do nothing. We are not going to sit back and allow the problems of chemical-can disposal to increase each year, year after year. And we are not then going to establish some kind of task force to find out what we already know: that present policies of chemical-can disposal are not as effective as they should be.

Mr. Speaker, we are moving ahead with a plan, a sound plan that calls for immediate action. We think the people of Saskatchewan deserve that kind of response. Mr. Speaker, the Department of the Environment is in the process of finalizing details of a major pilot project, or a phase 1 program, to be in place for this crop season. There are approximately 700,000 20-litre metal chemical containers sold annually in Saskatchewan. The program this year would be aimed primarily at dealing with this type of container.

In conjunction with SARM and SUMA, the Canadian Agricultural Chemicals Association, and the Department of Agriculture, the program would include the collection and crushing of the containers at a network of collection sites across the province established for the convenience of the farmers. Mr. Speaker, a contractor would be hired by the Department of Environment to visit the collection sites, crush the metal containers and collect the residue. Various private companies and individuals have expressed an interest in retaining the metal from the cans for scrap.

Although the market for scrap metal is presently limited, it is hoped that it would improve a year or two from now. The residue from these metal containers would be placed in sealed drums and set out of the province for disposal at a chemical disposal facility. Mr. Speaker, our government feels the practice of rinsing the chemical containers is both economically and environmentally sound, and only thoroughly rinsed containers should be taken to the collection sites. The main focus of our program for chemical-can disposal would be on co-operation — co-operation from the farmers, municipal governments, pesticide dealers, and the provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, each rural municipality is being sent a letter requesting that a site be established, preferably in conjunction with a few other rural municipalities, so that local governments assume some of the responsibility by establishing and maintaining the site. Our Department of Environment is recommending that the site be located in a dry area at the waste disposal ground, that it is fenced, and that it provides for the separation of the containers from other refuse. The government believes it would be possible to establish one site in each rural municipality in conjunction with its waste disposal ground, but encourages a co-operative effort between two or three municipalities in order to make the collection and crushing operation more efficient.

SARM has stated that it supports the request for co-operation directed towards the rural municipalities, and groups such as the Canadian Agricultural Chemicals Association, SUMA, and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool have stated that they would aid in the educational and advertising aspects of the program. This support says a lot for the Government of Saskatchewan and the people of the province. Mr. Speaker, it shows yet another example of how our government is working through a spirit of co-operation with specific groups, to develop programs and policies to benefit the province. And it is through this spirit of co-operation that this government's program to provide for the safe disposal of containers will be successful.

Mr. Speaker, the local governments and various groups throughout Saskatchewan have looked to our government to provide leadership and initiative to solve the

problems of chemical can disposal. And the government, along with the support, input and co-operation from the farm chemical industry, will see to it that these problems are dealt with and resolved.

It is with this in mind, then, that I ask for the full support for the motion that I present in the House today. That I, seconded by my good friend and colleague, the hon. member from Melfort:

That in the opinion of this Assembly, policies should be established and put in place without delay to provide for the safe disposal of containers of toxic chemicals.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, I too would like to speak on this motion, and I heartily endorse the concept of cleaning up our environment and taking care of these 700,000-plus cans that are at the present time left around the countryside, even floating down streams, and so on.

What perturbs me, though, as I look at the estimates, and I look at, I look (thank you), and I look at the numbers that are in place in the Department of the Environment (for example — 137.8 thousand dollars, instead of 170 thousand, and that was a 10 per cent cut the year before) . . . I think, I think that the intentions that the minister speaks about, and the motion that he's bringing before us today, is a topical one. But I wish you would have done your homework in your caucus; and I wish you would have done your homework before the estimates were brought out, before the budget was. Because, you are saying that you're writing letters to our R.M.s. My municipal taxes will go up again and the R.M.s are asked to pick up some dry sites, and pick up new sites.

I was involved when we were working on a program with, jointly with the R.M.s to, to provide sanitary sites for just regular disposal. And you can tell that you're very experienced in government, because you mustn't realize how difficult it is to even obtain sites.

Now, part of this program, and if you're serious about collecting cans, why didn't you have a line in the budget saying that: 'Here is so much money for the R.M.s to provide and buy these sits'? That's an expensive proposal that you're asking. So you're saying to the R.M.s: 'Get a site. Haul your containers there. Make sure the site is high and dry. Establish it and maintain it. And we'll hire a contractor to go out and crush the cans when, when there's . . . Ipsco ever gets started up again, and requires the used steel.'

I think, I think the co-operation aspect's wonderful. But as a provincial and as a senior government is put your bucks on the line, and let the R.M.s know what they're supposed to do, not continually encourage cut-backs. I think we need to study this situation and do a lot more work on it. The theory is wonderful.

I think . . . start, start up . . . I like what the Saskatchewan safety people are doing. The safety council suggested, and I as a farmer . . . I don't know if you do that, I don't know if the member does that, but I take and I rinse my cans three times. Part of that is maybe my background and paying 130 or 150 or \$300, depending what you're buying, for that can, and I want to get every drop of good out of it. So I rinse my cans three times. And then another trick that works very good is: take your tractor and drive over the can, and you've got it crushed right down flat. It crushes nicely. Then you can pack and store them in a small spot. It doesn't take that big an area.

I think we could make, arrange that would be nearly as costly. If you'd tell the farmers in my area that a truck or a contractor is going to move in and crush some cans, we'd bring them to him right on site. There wouldn't have to be a long-term storage there. We could, we could make those arrangements. That wouldn't be a costly item for the, for the municipalities having to spend additional money to prepare a great, wonderful site that has to be drained properly and on a high ground, and I know that there's other cases, but many people leave their can. They pour it in and when it quits running they quit. They don't bother taking the lid off, and they don't bother rinsing them, and I think those are some of the issues we should start pressing, start encouraging, giving the Saskatchewan Safety Council a little more money instead of less money, giving the Department of Environment a surge of cash that they can do these kinds of things. Don't cut back and then come out with a wonderful resolution.

I think this resolution needs some amending and I need time to work it up, because this government has to be condemned for its failure to act with us here on a serious problem. So, Mr. Speaker, on the light of that I beg leave to adjourn debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

### **Resolution No. 6 — Farm Purchase Program**

**MR. MARTENS:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour for me at this juncture to rise to discuss a resolution, I think, that has been a very strong or has had strong support from me and from, from members of our agriculture caucus. And I like to make some mention about some of the things that I think are, are just very good co-operation we've had between these two groups, and we want to deal with that in some, to some extent today.

I think we have to deal with it from the top to the bottom, and we'll start, start with the Premier. The Premier in his, his outline, in his program for, for the, for the provincial election last spring outlined some very pointed things that we as Conservatives were going to do, and one of them was initiate a farm purchase program that was going to supply rural Saskatchewan with some funding so that they could again begin to own their own land. And I think that that was a very candid approach to something that was very necessary in, in the agricultural field.

The Minister of Agriculture, upon taking office, also assumed that same stance and then, through the work, through the past summer, we initiated a lot of work through the department and through the members of the agriculture caucus, and we did a lot of work in preparing the agricultural portion of the farm purchase program.

I think the work of the Legislative Secretaries, the member for Rosthern, the member for Weyburn, have to be commended for their work. But I would also like to commend the chairman of our caucus, the member from Saltcoats, for his, his work and his untiring efforts that he placed in dealing with this subject, and I think he needs to be recognized for that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MARTENS:** — We have a unique situation in the province of Saskatchewan that I

think is unique to Canada. There's, there are statistics that show that 40 per cent of all the arable land in Canada is in Saskatchewan, and that is . . . I looked up the, the meaning of the word 'arable,' and that's all the land that can be ploughed. And I think that that is a indication of the significance that agriculture has to the economy of this province. And I'm, I'm happy to say that the farm purchase program addresses that in a very major way.

The second thing that needs to be addressed is that 25 per cent of all the privately owned land in Canada is owned by the people of Saskatchewan. I think that is also a significant figure, Mr. Speaker, because it outlines, in my opinion, some of the concepts and the philosophies of the people of Saskatchewan. When 25 per cent of all the privately owned land in Canada is held by the people of Saskatchewan, it indicates to me that the people take the ownership of their property as a priority in dealing with, with their, their own philosophy and dealing with stability in the economy. Many people use that ownership as, as a means to hedge against the hard times.

And I think it goes back to, to some of the, the growth that the people had from the times when they went through the '30s and the Depression. And I think that that established within their own minds some of the requirements that they thought they needed to have in order to maintain themselves in agriculture. And I think ownership was a priority to them then, and I think it's a priority to the people today, as we have indicated, or had indicated to us by the amount of people who have been interviewed and who've been placed before us to, to accept this program as a part of initiating some of the, the benefits that we can give to them in agriculture.

I would also like to indicate some of the problems that we've had in relation to, to accepting on this side of the House some of the remarks made by people opposite in, in dealing with not establishing a comparative, or something to compare to. And generally what we've had from them is doom and gloom. We have no real depth to our program. They're looking down on it.

And I want to compare some things today that I think are relevant to this. First of all, the land bank program had 151 people buy their land. That's first issue we want to address. The second issue we want to address is the 2,700 people who qualified to lease that land. And, in dealing with that, I want to continue on to some of the other things that are there. From January 1st of this year until today, or this week, we will initially market some 21,000 acres of land, or 137 quarters — 7,300 acres sold by public tender, 2,600 acres purchased by lessees and another 12,000 that have been put on the tender block. Now, dealing with this, we have come the full circle to some of the things that farm credit corporation have done, done for us. And I would like to commend them for their show of responsibility in dealing with the issues that they had to do.

They have interviewed over 5,600 people in the past three months in dealing with the farm credit, making available to the people of Saskatchewan, the residents, some of the, some of the aspects of the farm purchase program. They've done that, and I think they've done a commendable job.

And 5,655, to be precise, Mr. Speaker, people who have been interviewed by farm credit corporation, and I think it shows a sign that if people are really prepared to work, we can work together with some aspects of the federal government. In dealing with these 5,655 interviews we have put together about 2,480 people who are eligible for the program — 2,488, to be precise, Mr. Speaker, people who are eligible for the program. In three months, Mr. Speaker, that amounts to \$310 million that we have

anticipated that our people of Saskatchewan are going to use in the, in the farm purchase program. I think it's commendable.

There are 975 people who have indicated their willingness to go ahead under this program already, and they have sent in their, their applications, together with their, their appraisal fees, and they're going ahead with their program — 975, for a total of \$124 million.

Another thing I want to mention here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, is the 478 who have already received final approval. And that's 478 who are using our program, compared to the 151 that the former administration thought was such a great record. And that, that, Mr. Speaker, is a total of \$58 million, or roughly 1,000 quarters of land have moved into the private ownership in transfers from generally in the, within the family.

Here's, here's another thing that's indicated by the farm purchase program and their involvement, and that 60 per cent of the total involvement is within family.

When we were speaking about our campaign in our constituencies about the things that we were intending to do with our program in farm purchase, the one single feature that we emphasized more than any other, was that the family farm maintain itself within that family. And, Mr. Speaker, we are doing that. We are doing that, and I think it's a very commendable feature of our program. Sixty per cent are within the family. And I think that indicates to me, Mr. Speaker, that the, the people who are, are utilizing it, are utilizing it to their greatest advantage, and I think that's important.

There are 30 . . . We said that we would not limit it to that. And here is the other feature that is important: 39 per cent of the people are qualifying to buy it from someone else. And I think that's an important feature in maintaining the family farm in a, in a viable position.

Then we have something that deals a little in a deviation from this and that's the 2 per cent that the, that the people who have land bank land have used our, our program. Now that's not a very large percentage, Mr. Speaker. But I indicated earlier that around 21,900 acres are going to be moved through the land bank into this program. And that, I think, is significant in itself that the people are, are beginning to plan with using our program to implement some of the things that they, they think are a priority on their farms. And I think that's important.

Another thing that I would like to address, Mr. Speaker, is the point that our Premier made in regards to the program in his address to us on the throne speech, and that was that the minister, the, the Leader of the Opposition did not mention it in his address. And I went and checked it myself and that in fact is correct. He didn't mention it. And I think that is significant in itself. Because I think he didn't want to because it is a program that's working and it's working well and he didn't want to bring it up. So I'm going to bring it up instead. And, and I wish he was here to hear it. But he should be candid enough at least to admit that the program is working and it's working well.

Another thing that I want to draw to your attentions. That's page 197 on your *Hansard*. And some remarks that were made by the, the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg in relation to the throne speech debate in indicating that the people in the land purchase program or the farm purchase program really weren't all that great. It was, it was . . . He down-played it. And he said here and I quote:

They didn't mention anything about the 2,700 family farm units created through the land bank program which they have destroyed.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we didn't destroy it. People are today in a position where they can purchase it. We're not destroying it. In fact, in fact we are, we are accenting that. We are saying to, to this House and to the people of Saskatchewan that, that we have in fact increased their viability in, in their capacity as farmers in, in the province of Saskatchewan. And we're not destroying it.

There are many . . . Here's another quote, here's another quote for, for the people of this legislature:

There are many samples of injustices being posed on land bank lessees.

Now I, I have a constituent of mine or a number of constituents of, of mine that — I just want to read you a little bit about whether we are really imposing injustices on these people — of constituents of mine who have, who have 42 quarters of land and they sold 35 of them to the land bank commission and they received the money on October of 1981, for a total of \$1,836,900.

I took the time, Mr. Speaker, also today, to find out just what the interest rate was on the dollar in October of 1981. Treasury bills, on 91-day treasury bills, were at 19.35 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That, multiplied out, would have given them a return on that \$1,800,000 of \$355,000 annual interest. Bank prime was at 21 and the Bank of Canada was running at 19.6 and savings accounts (and they could've put it in there) was at 17.25, or for a total of \$316,000. That \$1,836,000 was drawing \$316,000 interest.

Do you want to know what the rent on that 35 quarters of land was? \$41,000. So they had a net return on their interest of \$275,000. And that's a rip-off? That, Mr. Speaker, is what I call a rip-off of the people of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MARTENS:** — The cost of our program, Mr. Speaker, in farm purchase for 1982-83, will be less than the interest costs on the land bank program. And I think that's a commendable, commendable thing on our part that we have that opportunity to present in a, in a way where people will begin to own their own land and then have the opportunity to get that capital gain that they have entitled to them. And I think, I think that is one of the heights of injustices that I see — not from the farm purchase program, but from the land bank program.

There's another thing that I want to read. The . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The people on the, in the opposition want to take it as read; well, we'll enlighten them a little bit more. I know the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg says this: '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 disrepresent it.'

Well, Mr. Speaker, we don't hate the program with a vengeance. We hate the system where the government has state ownership, and I think that that's, that's a part of the program that each one of us here . . . And our parents came from those kind of countries where they disliked it intensely. And I don't think that we have any right to



impose upon the people of Saskatchewan state control of land.

Mr. Speaker, we have some other things that were suggested by the . . . I see he has finally arrived. I'm quoting the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg:

Mr. Speaker, that's blatant, that's a blatant dishonest approach. The minister knows, and his Legislative Secretary knows, that 2,700 farmers were established on viable farm units.

Now I just outlined a viable farm unit to you just a little earlier, where the difference in the . . . excuse me, Mr. Speaker . . . where the difference in the rate of interest over what they could have, what they leased the land for was over \$300,000. Now that is, that is injustice. That is dishonest. I don't, I don't know what else could be. But that's, that's the land bank approach to the farming in Saskatchewan.

I'm, I'm just going to outline . . . We don't want to compare, we don't want to compare apples with oranges. We're, we're just, we're just going to outline some more, more things here. We want to compare apples with apples. There was, there was a, an individual who went to the restaurant, and he, he wanted a whole pie, and they hadn't had that opportunity to give a whole pie to an individual, or sell him, so they asked him, they asked him, 'What do you want it cut in: four sixes, four pieces or six pieces?' Well, he said: 'I don't think I can eat six,' so he cut it in four.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we want to compare apples with apples here today so I thought I would do something. The 200,488 farmers that are eligible for the, for farm purchase program in the three months, if we would divide that in total by the three months, that would be 829 per month; 829 per month, okay?

Let's, let's deal with another issue. If we dealt with only those who had said that they were willing to put in their appraisal fees — that would be 975 individuals, or an average of 325 per month. If we wanted to take it even a step further, we could say that there's 478 who have received final approval. They have received final approval and that is 159 per month.

And in 11 years of land bank, 11 years of land bank which equals 132 months, the state ownership of farms using the 2,700 farms that they have said are viable agricultural units, that would have been 20 a month; 20 a month compared to the, to the farm purchase program which have, have identified 159 people in their farm purchase program every month so far. And I think that is commendable to this government for establishing a program that the farmers wanted, and it's, it's a program that the people think are, is, is important, and I think it's, I think it's good.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MARTENS:** — It says here, one more item . . . Here it says, and they have, 'Now they have not only destroyed the program, they are taking out, taking it out on the lessees such as the case I have just mentioned earlier.'

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have, we have identified people who are taking it out on the provincial government. I think that that's unnecessary too. We want to, Mr. Speaker, deal with some items on the farm purchase program, to some extent, a little later. We will outline them probably in the time to come. But in the meantime, I think I want to, at this time, say that the Minister of Agriculture and his officials have done an excellent

job in dealing with the farm purchase program in Saskatchewan. They've done an efficient job; they've worked hard.

And again, I would like to compliment the chairman of the agriculture caucus, who encouraged and worked hard to get the program going. I think it was important, and therefore I would like to move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by my colleague, Mr. Petersen, from Kelvington-Wadena:

That this Assembly commends the Minister of Agriculture and his officials for the efficient manner in which the farm purchase program has been implemented.

**MR. PETERSEN:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know my friend in the opposition is very eager to speak so I'll try to keep my remarks brief. I think the most important part, I think the most important part of this whole debate today is efficiency — efficiency. I think the easiest measure of efficiency is the dollar cost for the number of people who are served. So, if you're listening over there in the opposition, I've got some figures for you.

In the last year of the land bank program's operation it cost \$2,043,430 to administer that program. The budget for the farm purchase program, 1983-84, is \$415,000. That's quite a difference, isn't it? Quite a difference. You've heard my colleague from Morse comment on the number of people that are being served by the programs — 159 a month compared to 20 a month. And at quite a bit less expense to the province. Now that's efficiency.

When the programs were first announced the opposition had a lot to say. They seemed to have a lot of questions. They were out rounding up support. They were going to pounce on us, make us look foolish. There were all sorts of threats.

I had a few questions from my constituents that were raised to me (no complaints, mind you). I had a few questions though. One of those was: 'If the land bank is repealed, will my long-term lease on land bank land still be in force?' Well, I think the answer to that was yes, and we've proved it. Under section 8(2) it was specified that long-term leases would continue in effect, and that lessees holding long-term leases would continue to have the right to assign the lease to a member of the immediate family. No change there at all.

Another question was: how would The (new) Land Bank Repeal and Temporary Provisions Act affect the rental rates? People were concerned about rental rates, and I don't blame them. Section 13 of Bill 46 does give the government authority to set rental rates on land bank lands by regulation. However, the Minister of Agriculture (as you well know) said many times that there would be no increase on the rent on land, on land bank land, in 1983.

Lands that were presently administered under the land bank land will be transferred over to the lands branch for administration purposes. Another question that came to me was whether or not Bill 46 would cancel all the terms and conditions of the land bank lease. And the answer was, no. Almost all of the aspects of the land bank lease would remain in force. The provisions respecting evaluation of property owned by lessees, duration of the lease, the right to assign the lease, all stayed in effect. No problem with that.

And another question was: 'After the passage of Bill 46, would I still be able to purchase

my land bank land?' Well, of course you will, and of course you have been able to. Bill 46 enables approximately 1,000 lessees who have not held their leases for more than five years to purchase them immediately. And some of those people have taken advantage of that provision. And I'm glad. That five-year provision was a terrible thing, a very terrible thing.

I have to go back to the story of my friend who started farming at the same time as I did. And I've repeated this story before, and I guess I'll have to repeat it again. And maybe if the hon. members of the opposition would take note of it they might see why they failed to win the voters' confidence on April the 26th.

My friend and I started farming the same time. I purchased land; he received land bank land from the land bank. It, it had been previously owned by his father. About three years after we both began farming he had to go out of operation. He had to shut down. He couldn't afford to continue. He had to quit. He had no equity base to borrow money when hard times came. And that was the sad part — the terribly sad part — about the whole program. Any equity that was built up went to the state — not to the farmer, not to the actual person working that land. And that was what was wrong with that system.

I, on the other hand, who had suffered the same types of problems — the low quotas, the frosts, the droughts, you name it — I had the opportunity to go to the banks and the lending institutions and borrow money against my equity so that I could continue operating, so that I could reinvest. My equity had been built up; his hadn't. I'm still farming; he isn't. But he doesn't show up when there's statistics. You don't hear them talk about those people.

The opposition quotes loud and long about the 2,700 people who were established in farms. What about my friend? What about my friend? He tried his best. He had the same situation that I had, and he couldn't quite make it. Where was your precious land bank system any good to him? Not one little bit. If a program like the farm purchase program had been in effect, he too would have been able to purchase his land, and he too would still be farming.

Other questions that came to me were related to the improvements that were situated on the land bank land. A lot of people were concerned about those. Well, it's very simple. A lessee, who would terminate his lease by his own choice, would receive the value of the improvements, using the same formula that had been there before. He'd then have the option of selling them for that price or removing them. There was no change there. There was no big problem.

Another question was: what will happen to land bank land which becomes vacant? And the answer to that, I think, is very simple: We've seen it, we've seen it put into practice. My colleague from Morse pointed it out. Land bank lands which become vacant will be put up for, for sale by tender. Some of these sales have already occurred. There's nothing wrong with that at all. The Government of Saskatchewan was not kicking anyone off their land. They were not forcing them out. They were not charging them exorbitant rental rates. If someone decided to terminate his own lease, fine. Maybe he wants to do something different. When he terminates it, his land goes up for tender. Pardon me, the state land goes up for tender. I have a rough time with that because I'm very, very much in favour of personal ownership rather than state ownership and I, you know, can't quite conceive of farming land that belonged to, to the state. I would view it as my own if I was farming it; however that was not the case in law.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that I could go on and on, on this subject . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Oh, please do.

**MR. PETERSEN:** — Oh, would you like to hear some more? . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . It's good stuff? I'm getting contradictory opinions here. The opposition, as usual, is not in agreement with one another on their own benches.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — There's only two of them here.

**MR. PETERSEN:** — There's only two of them there. That's true. I forgot. Yes, that's true. The others couldn't take any more of it.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — They can't take the truth.

**MR. PETERSEN:** — That's true. They can't take the truth.

The Saskatchewan Farm Purchase Program's aims were to preserve the tradition of the family farm in Saskatchewan, the traditional family farm as we have known it, the transfer from father to son, from grandfather to son, the in-family transfers, the transfers of land from the fellow down the road who maybe didn't have any family to pass it on to, passing it on to one of two or three sons or daughters of the neighbouring farmer. That is the traditional transfer of land. And we have again reinstituted that. After 11 years of a socialistic experiment we have again reinstituted that to the betterment of the people and to the young farmers of Saskatchewan.

Also, if you take a look at it, our 8 per cent and 12 per cent guaranteed interest rates were something that would protect and safeguard the young developing farmer from the effects of fluctuating and often runaway mortgage rates as we have seen in the past couple of years. People could not afford, just could not afford to continue operating if they had to go out and buy their land at 16, 18, 20, 22 per cent. But at 8 per cent, they can make it. They can make it and they have faith that they can make it and we see that from the amount of people that want to purchase their land. The figures speak for themselves.

Our program is geared towards the small and perhaps medium-sized farmer. I come from an area where the average-sized farm is probably four quarters. Perhaps the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg comes from areas where it's somewhat larger than that, and perhaps he himself farms somewhat larger than that, but I'm looking at people in my area of four, five quarters of land. That's not exorbitant. They want to go out and buy another one perhaps if they have two, or what have you. They'll have six maybe at the most. That's not exorbitant. We are not creating land barons with our program. We're helping younger farmers, farmers who want to expand just a little bit, farmers who want to have a viable operation, maintain the traditional family farm. That's the purpose of this program, and that's the purpose that's being served.

Mr. Speaker, before my colleague in the opposition benches suffers heart failure from the agitation he's now experiencing, I think I will now quit. Only, before I do, I will say I am very pleased to have seconded that motion from the member from Morse.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to speak on this resolution. And I think the members made a effort at bragging up their farm purchase plan and their, or their farm purchase program. And I think, well they should, because as I look at the agricultural estimates, and as I look at the agricultural estimates, I see numbers like 13 per cent decrease in expenditure, 13 per cent decrease in expenditure from last year, in agriculture alone.

Here we are living in a province whose mainstay is agriculture. Everybody agrees it's the backbone of our province, and this backbone supports and strengthens the entire nation and keeps it afloat. And they would get up and say what a wonderful thing they're doing and what this farm community is doing, and they come up with a 13 per cent decrease in ordinary expenditures. And, as I look at it, a lot of the numbers I kind of even think are, are fleshed in there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we really don't have a true picture of what they're saying. And the only flag that you have to hold up and say what we're doing for agriculture is the farm purchase plan.

Number one, if you happen to be unfortunate enough to be worth less than \$350,000, this program would apply. And if you would have accepted a resolution that I put to your motion, when it was originally introduced, it would apply to every farmer that has a farm credit corporation loan and is worth less than \$350,000. Why didn't you try and accommodate at least a few of the 700 farmers that you turned down, that were ready to take over some farms? Their applications had been approved under land bank. Seven hundred young families were ready to go farming and you froze the program; you put them on hold. And then you bragged about having a great influx into your new program. These people were looking for that money to get into farming.

Now, some of them were a little bit aggressive, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A few of those 700 were aggressive and they made financial arrangements before the end of the year. In April they were promised a contract. They had a commitment. When the money was made available they were going to go farming. On the 15th of April the election was held and the first thing your government did is said, 'Zap. No more, no more farm, no more land bank money, no more programs.' And you tore up those contracts; you wouldn't proceed with those 700 contracts.

Those 700 people, some of them — 238, farm credit corporation tell me — 238 of those people made prior arrangements with farm credit corporation at 15-plus per cent interest. Two hundred and thirty-eight farmers are stuck with the 15 per cent loan. They counted on this 8 per cent money. They knew you made the promise; they knew you made the commitment. But what happened? January 1, '83 your new program was announced and said, 'It starts today.' No retroactivity in the plans. No retroactivity in the plan.

Do you know what those people are doing? They're trading land. They're selling it to their brother or reversing and making new applications. And all you're doing is helping the lawyers. You're switching over some ownership. But I know of many cases where one brother is selling to a cousin or a nephew or another brother, and they're making internal changes so that they can qualify for the 8 per cent. That's what you're making these people do. And all you would have had to do is include additional 230 that were under the farm credit corporation plan.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You can't do that.

**MR. ENGEL:** — You certainly can. You certainly can. You better check it out . . .

(inaudible interjection) . . . Pardon?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You can't be a buyer and seller. You can't do that.

**MR. ENGEL:** — You don't know what you're talking . . . The member, the member, the member from Rosthern will have opportunity to get into this plan, and he'll have opportunity to correct me. And I'll, I'll read your notes. I'll read the minutes to see what you said in correction of that. But my argument from day one was if land bank's so bad let the farmers decide if they want or not. Why not leave the two programs run side by side? It wouldn't have . . . It wouldn't have cost you any money.

You know now, the member, the member from Kelvington gets up and he uses this word that's a wonderful Tory word, and they think they have a, a special hold to it, and it specially applies to the . . . (inaudible) . . . this word 'efficiency.' They use this word 'efficiency.' 'Efficiency is the name of the game,' he said, 'in the farm purchase plan.' How many dollars have we got and how many people are, how many people are we going to serve? That was the question he asked. And I'd like to, I'd like to have the member comment on efficiency.

Where are they getting the money to finance their program, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Where are you getting the money in your budget? Where is the money coming to, from, to farm, to finance the farm credit corporation interest reduction program? I think it's terrible that you're using a misnomer and calling it a farm purchase plan, because it isn't. The farmer has to go to farm credit corporation. If he gets himself a farm credit corporation loan, he then can go to the Minister of Agriculture. And if he's painted with a nice blue and orange stripe he might qualify, he might qualify for an interest reduction. So the name should be 'farm credit corporation interest reduction program if you are a Tory.' . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . 'Governments change,' he said.

I would like to have the minister stand up and say that the former administration used political pressure on the land bank. I'd like to make you make that kind of charge. But I can already make charges. I can already make charges . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . You'll get your chance to speak. We'll wait, we'll wait and give you a chance to speak if you would like. And if the farmer from Regina North wants to speak, maybe we'll even give him a chance, but right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have the floor. In, in . . . Originally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suggested that what I don't like about the farm purchase plan, and it reminds me of Alberta programs: you make the fence small so that nobody can get into it, and then the person wanting to get a loan goes to his political person, the local MLA or the minister or the political hack in the riding, and says, 'Look, I'd like to get in on that program but I just about qualify.' And he gets 'em in with a little political arm-twisting. That is what this farm credit corporation interest reduction program is all about. And that's why it was designed.

If, if you would've wanted to make a farm . . . If you'd wanted to make an interest reduction program, and have a genuinely, truly farm purchase plan, you would've made the program, you would've made the program available to farm credit corporation. And you would've told the farm credit corporation, 'Write loans at 8 per cent. Write loans at 8 per cent.' But why didn't you write loans at 8 per cent? Why didn't, why doesn't the farm credit corporation write loans at 8 per cent? Why does the applicant have to qualify under the present loan? That's question number one. I'd like the next speaker to answer that.

Why does the applicant have to qualify under farm credit corporation's loans, and then he goes to the Minister of Agriculture and gets his assistance? There's, number one, the reason why they want their political pressure, why they want their little staff of seven to decide who gets the loan or not. That's what I call, that's what I call using a little fence that only a few can get into — 7,000 applications, 400 processed. How come? How come? How come?

I think, I think, in this government's hurry, in this government's hurry to get this bill passed, they ignored the requests of the farmers that filled the galleries. You remember how many farmers were here. I would like to have any one of the proponents and people that brag about the farm purchase plan stand up and tell us whenever there was a piece of legislation which so many farmers were against.

The farm purchase program was implemented on the back of the land bank. They couldn't implement it without destroying the land bank. Now they've moved the land bank's assets into the heritage fund, and are spending that extra \$500 million. If they wouldn't have had the efficiency of the former administration that could implement a program and put 2,700 farmers on the land, and at the same time saved \$500 million, that's what I call dollars and efficiency — saved \$500 million, made \$500 million. There's \$500 million to the good, not a deficit like you guys got, not a 575 or 500 and (and what's 20 and 17? 37), \$537 million deficit. The land bank alone has enough money in it to pay your entire deficit. Your entire deficit could be picked up from what we made in the land bank, and he says that they introduced this program for efficiency, for dollars for people served. Here we served 2,700 people and accumulated \$500 million, and you say that that's a bad program . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . There might be some. He calls that efficiency. What, what is your program going . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Regina North West seems to want some questions answered. I'd suggest he maybe as a farmer, flat-footed one maybe at that, gets into the debate and tells us how much land he leases and how much land he farms. But I think, I think the program that, that we have introduced, and the program that this government has killed and destroyed, they will be sorry for it. I, I think there's going to be time when you're going to be sorry that they destroyed a program that served a lot of people and was efficient — was efficient, and saved some money at the same time. It saved some money.

Now, the member for Kelvington, the member for Kelvington talked about purchase versus lease. Purchase versus lease. Now if, if he wants to come down and visit some farms that are efficient, and I have neighbours that are very efficient farmers — they have a lot of equipment; they have their own semi-trailers to haul their grain and all. But you know what those farmers are starting to do? Do you know what those farmers are making their money at, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They are leasing some land. Would you believe it? They're leasing some land. Not only that, they're leasing their equipment. Leasing seems to be the way to go. Leasing seems to be the way to go in the high costs today, and to meet the cost-price squeeze.

Leasing seems to be a good way to go, and all of a sudden, and all of a sudden it's not a good thing to lease land. All of a sudden leasing isn't good. I have some friends that lease land. I have some friends and neighbours that lease land. They have permanent operations. The former president of the SARM, for example, leases 80 per cent of his land — big operator. The biggest in my constituency leases 80 per cent of his land from the crown. He happens to have crown land. I don't think you'd call, I don't think you'd

call Mr. Anderson a socialist. He's a constituent of mine. He's proud of leasing his land. He has lease land, lots of it, more than a township likely, and you know, he does very well on that land, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He does very well on lease land. And so do a lot of our constituents. So do a lot of our constituents . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I did, I did, the very first time I got elected. The very first time I got elected. I and my colleague from Shaunavon represent a lot of farmers that lease a lot of crown land and that have been a long time . . . they've been long-time residents. I could, I could list names of seven or eight or ten prominent families in my riding that have been there since the turn of the century, that have been on that land since the turn of the century, and they are on leased, they are on lease land.

I wish, I wish I could have an operation of my own where I could lease 75 per cent of my land. I wish I could have an operation where I could lease 75 per cent of my land, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and have the same kind of assurance as the ranchers have down in the south country on lands branch land. I wish there was enough land to go around.

The young people getting started, the young people getting started on farming . . . The young people getting farming . . . getting started on farming are leasing land and were doing a good job and had some stable farm units. And I know, when I look across at the members opposite, there are members in this House that have some lease land. I know there are. I've talked to them individually, and I've talked to them privately. And they are reasonably good members. There is nothing the matter with leasing land. And I'm sure the member for Kinistino will agree with me. I'm sure the member from Arm River agrees with me that land bank land isn't so bad. I'm sure he does. And there's other members here that agree that land bank land isn't all bad.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a government that prides itself on having public consultation and public input, I think cannot be commended for implementing this farm purchase program and holding to ransom land bank lessees — holding up for ransom, using the equity that they built in this province, built up enough equity to pay off your entire deficit, if you'd use it for that. If you'd use the land bank land, if you'd use the land bank land, the equity that you have built up in the land bank land, they could take to pay off your entire deficit. There's \$500 million worth of equity was built up in the land bank program.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That those young farmers lost.

**MR. ENGEL:** — And the member from Kelvington wishes he would have said . . . yes, Kelvington, wishes he would've said more . . . and he claims they're losers.

The young land bank tenants in my constituency say they lost on April 20th. They were the big losers. You say you didn't tear up the contract. And you say their lease is good, but their lease included a rental rate that isn't in the new agreement. When they were moved into lands branch, they don't know what their rent's going to be down the road. You are bragging and saying that you didn't increase the rent this year. But in effect even leaving it the same under the formula is a 20 per cent increase for most of those farmers, and they know who did it to them, and they will remember.

And I think that this is a resolution that needs to be amended, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This Assembly should condemn the Minister of Agriculture for not including all the people that have farm credit corporation land, all the farmers that are paying more than 8 per cent interest, and are only worth \$200,000 — they should be included in this. The minister should be condemned for making it an exclusive little club that he can select



who his friends are who will get the loan.

That's another thing. I would like to also say that I'd like to commend farm credit corporation for the wonderful job they've done in processing these loans. They're doing a great job. They're working hard; they're working overtime, but there are a lot more applications processed by farm credit corporation than that are approved by your office. Your office isn't keeping up, and there's a reason for that. They're trying to do a blood test and they're trying to decide what their politics are, to make sure that they get the right farmers on the land. And, if you aren't, stand up and say so.

I can't support the motion the way it stands, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think it's terrible. It doesn't say where it's really at in Saskatchewan today. It's not helping young farmers get established in farming; it's helping the large established farmers use money at 8 per cent to expand already existing units, but it's not helping young people get started. If it were helping young people get started . . . If it were helping young people get started, FarmStart loans would be up there and they would have been used. But what happened? \$2 million worth of FarmStart loans and \$700,000 taken up; that doesn't sound like there's a lot of young people got into farming.

I think this government's actions loudly indicate that they are for the large, efficient farmer, the one who can take his semi-trailer and haul his grain to an inland terminal. They don't care for the little farmer in between. That's why they're putting up this big battle on the Crow rate, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's why they're introducing programs to encourage larger farmers rather than help young farmers get started. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SVEINSON:** — I rise on a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise on a point of order. The member who spoke just before I rose referred to me as a flat-footed farmer. He's embarrassed me personally; he's embarrassed my constituents in northwest Regina. We have a lot of farmers in northwest Regina, and I would request, on a point of order, that the member apologize to me personally, and the farming community that I represent in northwest Regina. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** — Is the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg speaking on the point of order?

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to withdraw the statement that I called him a flat-footed farmer. I realized at the time I was making it . . . I realized at the time I was making it, I should have called him a sounding gong or a tingling cymbal or something noisy, but I'm sorry. I'm sorry and I would like to withdraw that statement unequivocally.

**MR. SVEINSON:** — I accept his apology. I'll wait for the ruling. I would appreciate it if members opposite would consider the farming community with a little more responsibility; some of them do live in the city of Regina. Some of them do live in the city of Regina. I appreciate your . . .

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** — You can't speak to the point of order. Let's have order in the House please. I think the member from Regina North West has accepted the apology.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Sufficient.

**MR. MULLER:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very pleased to be able to say that I support resolution no. 6:

That this Assembly commends the Minister of Agriculture and his officials for the efficient manner in which the farm purchase program has been implemented.

The farm purchase program was a sure sign of the new direction Saskatchewan has taken in the field of agriculture, and that the new direction spells success for Saskatchewan farmers and for all the people of the province.

As you know, the farm purchase program pays interest rebates to eligible farmers on loans made with the farm credit corporation to buy farmland.

Gee, I'm sorry to see that the agricultural critic has just left the House.

The interest is rebated down to 8 per cent for the first five years, and 12 per cent for the second five years. The program is primarily aimed at allowing the transfer of the family farm from parents to children. But it also enables our starting-out farmers to buy land from anyone, anywhere in the province, and be protected from uncertain and high interest rates until they have established a viable operation. What that means is that our government is helping to preserve the family farm in Saskatchewan, and it's allowing young, starting-out farm people to own the land that they work, rather than tenants on the land.

The success of the farm purchase program is surely something we can all take great pride in, and how successful has it been thus far? So successful that it has greatly exceeded our expectations. So far, the farm credit corporation has already, already interviewed 5,655 farmers who are interested in the farm purchase program. Of those applicants, 2,488 of them have been identified as appearing to be eligible for rebates, and if they complete all necessary processing and are approved for rebate benefits, the total mortgage money involved will be \$310.5 million. Already 975 of those applicants have paid appraisal fees to the farm credit corporation and are undergoing final processing before approval is granted.

The mortgage amount involved with these 975 applicants totals \$124 million. Final approval has been given to 478 of these applicants, for \$58.1 million in eligible loans for purchase, to purchase nearly 1,000 quarters of farmland.

These figures show that we have indeed surpassed our projections for the number of rebate clients involved in the farm purchase program. Our projections were for 1,500 rebate clients with mortgages totalling 150 million in the first three months. That compares with the actual 2,488 potential clients, with 310.5 million in total mortgages.

Need we remind the former government how the success of the farm purchase program compares with the Saskatchewan land bank program? The former administration's land bank commission turned only 151 tenants into owners in 19 long, unproductive years. Our government has already put our 152nd client into ownership of, of his land in under 10 weeks. That says a lot for our government, and that says a lot

for the people of Saskatchewan, who ensured that the family is preserved by electing this government.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Minister of Agriculture and his officials for the efficient way in which the farm purchase program is being implemented in this province. The success of the program is a result of that efficiency. I support the resolution no. 6, and urge others in the House to do the same. Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BOUTIN:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the hon. member, Mr. Martens, from Morse constituency, and commend the Minister of Agriculture and his officials for the efficient manner in which the farm purchase program has been implemented.

Also, it gives me enthusiasm and a special pride to be here in this House, and a great feeling to be part of a team, a Progressive Conservative team, under the leadership of our Premier, Grant Devine.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people from Kinistino for electing me as their representative to this legislature. It is also a pleasure and an honour that I sit here on their behalf. On April 26, 1982, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan did not believe the NDP, and I don't believe that they will ever believe them again.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BOUTIN:** — The people of Saskatchewan wanted a party, a party that would listen to them, not listen to the families of crown corporations, but the true and real families of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Let's take, for example, our farm purchase program, which helped over 1,500 young members, or farmers in the four months that it has been implemented.

This is what I would like to do at this time, is commend the Minister of Agriculture. Just compare this to the NDP land bank program that helped only 151 young farmers in 11 full years of government. The program, in 27 months, Mr. Speaker, will help over 5,000 farmers. Now, farmers go to the farm credit, the reason being was to save the taxpayers money, not to create a great deal of bureaucracy and fancy offices, like the former government did with their land bank program — an attempt to only rent the land to those that had NDP memberships, Mr. Speaker.

When the land bank was first introduced, it was not to compete against farmers, but to buy land from the farmer that wanted his son to have it after he quit. It is not so with the former government. They went and paid more than the neighbour himself did, just to have the land owned and operated by the government. Why? So they could lease it back to one of their card-holders for the next election.

Mr. Speaker, before I go any further, I want to explain the true meaning of socialism as described in *Britannica* encyclopaedia:

Socialism means completely discarding private property by transforming it into public property, dividing the resulting public income equally and indiscriminately among the entire population.

On April 26, this is what the people feared in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and this is

what the NDP did.

Now, let's suppose, just to give you an example, let's say the former government would buy the land from a farmer, and pay out his loans. The farmer would then keep his farmyard. Then he would want to build, let's say, a barn, for example. He would go to FarmStart, mortgage the farmyard and the house. But he had to build, Mr. Speaker, under the government plan, not what he really wanted to build but to build in a certain way.

Mr. Speaker, then the operation was actually too big for what that person could handle. He would then eventually go broke. That's what happened. They would take the farmyard, take the house, and the family had nowhere else to go but on the road. No place to stay, Mr. Speaker.

Then the NDPs, they turn around and they say our farm purchase program will not work, Mr. Speaker. I know lots of individuals that have been operating through the established lending facilities we have, and are still operating today in these hard economic times. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this program offers rebate to conscientious and sensible starting-out farmers. So it provides for a farmer to buy, say, land worth \$100,000 this year and get program rebates — land for 150,000 the next year and still get program rebates. And if necessary, that more land for another 100,000 the following year. He still gains the program rebates.

The program doesn't force farmers to overload themselves with mortgage debt in order to gain rebates. We want to make it a worry-free program, as worry-free as possible that Saskatchewan residents can own their own farms. So all provisions of the program have been geared to aim at that point.

To be eligible for this program, Mr. Speaker, no one can be accepted like the hon. member was, on the opposite side of the House was mentioning awhile ago, that only the rich would get. No, Mr. Speaker. To be eligible for this program you, if you are worth over \$300,000 you are not accepted. However, having some capital doesn't disqualify a person from the program. Neither does a person increase in net worth after he or she joins the program. Net worth is of importance only at the time of application. After that, his personal wealth is of no concern to the plan regulations.

An increase in net worth would not affect his rebate status - \$350,000 for instance. If a person has less than \$200,000 net worth, he or she would be able to qualify for rebates to the full amount of the mortgage. For each single dollar over 200,000, the net worth rebate eligibility is reduced by \$3.50. This means by the time a person's net worth reaches 300,000, he or she would no longer be eligible. And we take this as very fair. This is to reassure the rebate benefits go to those who really need them.

One more big issue, Mr. Speaker, is the Crow rate on the Pepin plan which has some to do with this farm purchase program. When in the House only a few days ago, the hon. members of the opposite . . . We went through the nine steps and members opposite made a decision and took part and agreed to what our standards were on the Crow rate, against the Pepin plan. We said that we reject the Pepin plan and yet members opposite say that we have taken a weak or a meek stand on this. Well instead of snowing the truth, Mr. Speaker, from members opposite, how about a little bit of truth from them?

I'd like to go, but to a record of achievement with the members opposite, let us assume that in 1981 we were given five projects to be completed 100 years later. Number one

would be: design a railroad to handle traffic 100 years from then. Number two would be design a system for efficiently delivering mail. Number three, Mr. Speaker, would be to design a box, which when you turn a knob you can see things happening in colour in other parts of the world. Number four would be to design the device which will communicate voices around the world. Number five: design a device that will transport 300 people coast to coast within three hours. In 1981 we would probably chose projects one and two as those we could successfully accomplish within 100 years. The other three is impossible tasks to accomplish.

Yet, look at what has actually happened, Mr. Speaker. The three impossibles we have accomplished through private enterprises, which the two possibles have been tackled by our governments and are still to be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind members opposite that we on this side of the House know that the difficult we do immediately; the impossible takes a little bit longer. With that, I would like to support the motion. Thank you very much.

**MR. JOHNSON:** — Mr. Speaker, at the outset of this excellent motion put forward by my good friend, the member for Morse, I'd like to congratulate the, the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture and the whole Conservative government for coming up with such a forward-looking plan as the farm purchase program. I speak with that, with a lot of work that I put into it as agricultural chairman, and I can't condemn my, or can't commend my committee for all the hard work that they put into that program to make sure that it was done right. It excluded the people that didn't need the help. It simply helped all the intergenerational transfer of land from the young, from the old to the young. And, Mr. Speaker, it's been one of my sore spots for a long time, as I've farmed all my life. State-owned farms obviously don't work anywhere in the world, so why would they ever work in Saskatchewan? They never were meant to work; it meant a total takeover of government of land and put it into the government's hands so that they could be the complete bosses of the land.

I can't commend the members of my committee enough. We worked hours and hours and hours on that farm purchase program, and days and days and days. Programs like the farm purchase program, set together by the agricultural committee . . . And I can name a few things, Mr. Speaker, that we are looking at — to get, to wander off the subject a bit — was: the debt load to every, to the areas of agriculture; farm fuel reductions costs; the Crow rate, as you well know; land bank lease to the community pastures; and the lands branch land that's run by the government; debt services; Canagrex, etc. I believe, and I can say with, with all sincerity, that my group of committee members are doing as much as any committee in government, and, and I thank them for, for making, making my job much easier.

Most every agricultural program or, or change has come through our department since April the 26th. I see news releases. I see news releases with headings like, 'Farm Purchase Program Very, Very Well Accepted by all in the Agricultural Field.' The opposition don't agree with that, but nevertheless it's true. Headlines in January in the *Brandon Sun*. They had a full-page or a half-page article on how well the farm purchase program was being accepted in Saskatchewan. I made a solemn promise to myself a long time ago when this government started to buy land that I would go to the people and convince them that if I was elected, that at the end of my term, whatever that may be — 4 years or 8 years, 12 years or 20 years — the government would not own any farmland, and I will do everything in my power, Mr. Speaker, to see that that does not happen.

There is one case I want to indicate to you that I know, because I was personally close enough to understand what happened, and to kind, kind of let you know what, what . . . when the government gets into buying land, exactly what happens to prices. And he was a neighbour of mine, and he tried desperately to sell his quarter section for \$3,500. A short time later — I mean he'd done this to his neighbours — he asked them if they would buy him out because he wanted to retire. Somewhat later the land bank people came out from Regina. They simply took a car and they drove from one corner of the quarter section to the other quarter, corner of the quarter, and they paid that same man \$9,700 for that quarter of land. And he never done a thing. I mean that was within two or three months of, of the time of sale. So I can verify through facts that when government does get spending taxpayers' money and comes in competition with any farmer, he hasn't got very much hope of competing in any form.

Some points on the farm purchase program, and I would like now to commend a man by the name of Jim Webster.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. JOHNSON:** — And my colleagues will agree because we spent many, many hours with Mr. Webster on the farm purchase program. Many times we run well into the night, sometimes into midnight, and I want to thank Jim personally from the floor of the legislature because, when government employees have that calibre of people working for them, the program can't help but be a success.

The farm purchase program, Mr. Speaker, just in the first three months of its inception is right on target. I mean, we are just selling as many as we figured we would sell. In fact, probably more, but something that we could live with. We had a lot of troubles when we were getting Bill 45 and 46 through the House last fall. We had a lot of opposition from the galleries, as you well know, but we've completely convinced those land bank recipients and lessees out there, and assured them that we are not going to take the land away with them and drive them off the farm.

The interest rates that are locked in at five years for 8 per cent and another five years from 12 per cent is exactly what the farm community needs, and probably every business needs in Saskatchewan. If you know that come at the whim of some bank or some government that interest rates decide to climb 3 or 4 per cent in a matter of days or months, you can't live under those kind of circumstances. No matter how good a manager you are, it doesn't make any difference at all. If you can project that you can do so much and pay that rate of interest and pay that rate of payment, then you know exactly where your costs are. It's been said in the House already that we try and work towards arm's-length families, the intergenerational transfer of land, and so far the figures prove it; that 60 per cent of those are right on target. They are, in fact, transferring the family farms from the older to the younger generation. Final approvals of some 487, for a total of 100 and, or . . . I'm sorry . . . \$58.1 million, and we sold almost a thousand quarters of land.

And it's simple that all the land that comes, becomes vacant is simply sold by public tender. And, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the forms that go out in most, most farm newspapers, and the *Leader-Post* I believe, and it's just simply sold to the highest bidder, and that's all there is to it. If the farm . . . If land bank land is, is in the mind of the, of the farmer that wants to buy it, if the assessment is too high on it, or he thinks it is, he can simply go out to his neighbours and find out what land's been selling for. And if

he can prove to the board that, that that assessment is out of line, that will be looked at immediately and brought into line, because there is a difference between farms that are purchased for the productive value and for, and simply for an income for somebody to, to just buy land for the sake of buying land as a speculative investment.

So we've sold . . . By January the 31st, 1983, 7,300 acres have been sold by public tender, and 2,600 acres of those 7,300 acres were purchased by lessees. Furthermore, 12,000 acres will be sold by public open tender by the end of March 1983, or 1983, which is right now, Mr. Speaker.

The speaker from Assiniboia that was on the floor awhile ago, he kind of, kind of tries to indicate to the people out in televisionland that, that the farmers there haven't accepted this program whatsoever. Well, I'm sure that, that he's questioning their intelligence, and that message will get back to him. One thing, Mr. Speaker, I want to do is guarantee him, the member from Assiniboia, that I will personally send them over a set of the regulations of the farm purchase program yet this afternoon, just so that he'll have his facts straight on the requirements, because he seems to be away out in left field on them.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the motion no. 6 and commend the agriculture minister and his officials and urge all members of this House to support that motion. Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak on this motion that has been put by government members because it gives me an opportunity to put forward the views of, of our caucus, along with the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, as to our position in regards to the farm purchase program.

And, in starting out, Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the members continue their, their back-patting and cheer-leading session — how many hours they worked. And I'm not sure what they expected to do when they got elected, other than to work for the people of the province. That's what we all get paid for. And I think it's, it seems a little, a little tiring that we come in here and brag about how hard we work. Of course, we all work very hard, I presume, although, looking at the vacant desks on a day-to-day basis in the House, I wonder how hard the members work. But I think that, basically, we all do our job as members and to use the House's time to congratulate each other about the fact that we're doing a good job gets a little, a little tiring, to say the least.

In terms of the farm purchase program, I think the fact that 400 farmers have been helped by this program would lead me to believe, at least, that the program is working to some extent — that 400 people have been helped by the farm purchase program. But I think it's fair to say, as well, that 400 out of 67,000 farmers, the help isn't getting out to near enough people. In the budget that was announced last night, the 19 per cent decrease in agricultural spending I think will be very important news to the agricultural sector in the province of Saskatchewan, and will give an indication of what this government plans for the most important industry in our province.

I found it very difficult to accept that there was no increase in irrigation spending in the province for next year; that there was no fuel rebate program; and that while the farm purchase program has helped some 400-odd farmers of the 7,000 who have applied

for it, that leaves about 6,600 and a number of them in my constituency, who are very disappointed in the limitations of the farm purchase program.

I get letters, Mr. Speaker, on a, on a daily basis . . . I get letters on a daily basis from farmers in my constituency who are not able to get help from this program, the much lauded, at least by Conservatives, Conservative members, program which has turned down in fact, over 6,000 farmers who have applied, who were promised prior to the election that they would be eligible to \$350,000 at 8 per cent. Mr. Speaker, there was no mention prior to the election that there would be qualifications that would eliminate at least 90 to 95 per cent of the farmers who applied for the program. There was no mention of that made by the then critic of agriculture, the now minister, Eric Berntson, from Souris-Cannington or by any of the candidates who went around the province and promised \$350,000 for every farmer who would come forward and apply for it.

What we see is a program which has helped, and I want to reiterate that, that I support the help to those 400 farmers, but I would also like to see help for the over 6,000 who have been refused, who were promised assistance prior to April 26th.

Mr. Speaker, I think as well that I find it trying to accept the intolerance of members, including the member from Morse, of a program that had been in place by the previous government, that being the land bank program. I think that it was very obvious that a large number of farmers did accept the land bank program in Saskatchewan as a means of establishing young farmers on the land. I think that while we're saying that the people of Saskatchewan and many farmers did not agree with it, it was a plan that we put before the people, election after election. It was voted on '75 and accepted. It was voted on in '78 and accepted, and voted on in '82. And I suppose you can say rejected. And I agree, no problem, that there are people who didn't agree with the land bank program, just as there are people who do not believe in the lands purchase program, and many more now than there were before April 26th, because the 6,000 people who have been turned down are not terribly impressed with this new program.

But the distressing part in my mind are politicians who are so intolerant of other views, whether it's land bank or whether it's FarmStart, that are so intolerant that they talk about hating the program, and in fact, hating the very individuals who are involved in the land bank system. Because what that is, Mr. Speaker, is a slur on all of the 2,700 land bank lessees who have been involved in and believe in the land bank program — and not only the 2,700 people, but the thousands and thousands who applied for, but were not able to make use of, the program because there simply wasn't enough land bank to go around.

That would show to me that, rather than saying that that was a plan that was disliked by the farmers, the fact that when you had a piece of land up for lease, not one person applied for it, but as many as 40. Because that doesn't show you a program that is disliked by a large number of farmers. And for members to get up in this House and condemn not only the program (that's one thing) or the opposition (that's another), but to read letters from members of his own constituency and try to embarrass them, I think is a very, very difficult thing for the people of the province to accept. And to call the people who are, who are involved or infer that they may be dishonest or to try to discredit them in terms of the interest that they could have got on the money, I think shows a certain amount of disrespect for that group of people, and in particular, Mr. Speaker, members of his own constituency.

I'd like to just talk a bit about leasing land, and I know the member for Assiniboia-



Gravelbourg talked about the fact that there are large numbers of farmers in both of our constituencies, Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and Shaunavon, who have made their living, and are part of the heritage of our province, off land that they lease from the provincial government. And I suppose that could be one reason that those two constituencies are represented by people who believe that there can be a portion of the land owned by the government and leased to individuals, and as the member from Assiniboia commented, there are members, even in this government, even in this government, Mr. Speaker, who lease land from the government. And I say that for members to get up and talk about how these people who lease land from the government are somehow inferior, when in fact they as well lease land, is, leaves a little bit to, to the imagination, how they can explain that in their own minds. But given the fact of some of the leaps of logic that have occurred in speeches by members opposite, I guess we should expect that sort of thing.

I think the farmers, when they look at this budget, will be very disappointed in the, in the second Conservative budget and the fact that they allowed, I supposed, the first one to go by without seeing a lot done for them, for the 67,000 minus 400 who have used the farm purchase program. All the rest have been left with little or nothing from the budget, now two budgets. And I think that there is a bit of surprise out there, that the farmers thought they would do much better under a Conservative government, and are shocked and amazed that there is no plan for irrigation, that there is no farm fuel rebate program, and that the farm purchase program has helped only 400 people, when 67,000 were promised, prior to the election, that they would be eligible for the program.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that while I support the farm purchase program, I cannot support this motion which congratulates and talks about the great job and the amount of work that the Conservative caucus is doing, because I think that any government should take that for granted, that when elected they are going to work. Therefore, I will be opposing the motion.

**MR. KATZMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm kind of glad to, that I let the member from the opposite side of the House speak before me, because I would like to remind him of some of the things they did as they were government, and while he was a minister of that government and I think the . . . Mr. Speaker, you may remember this occasion very well yourself. When you were government and in the '78 election, you told all the senior citizens that there was going to be a special rebate for them. But you didn't tell them that you were taking away the original rebate on the homes. So when you . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. I think the member is straying a long ways from the subject of the debate that's before us, and I'd ask him to get back to the subject.

**MR. KATZMAN:** — I accept the Chair's ruling, and what I was referring to, Mr. Speaker, was the reminding of promises as he referred to about the 60, about everybody was told about the 8 per cent mortgage. Well, when you were government you told everybody about a rebate, but you didn't do it, you didn't fill in all the blanks and details either, so let's not play games.

And on the playing of games, I just went through the estimate book, and the former member, the NDP member that spoke earlier, doesn't seem to be able to do his mathematics very well, because if you go through the estimate book, you take agriculture estimates, vote 1; agriculture estimates, vote 2; FarmStart, vote 47; estimate heritage fund doesn't have a vote number. The agriculture vote, number 2

under the heritage fund again, and you total them up — there's more money there in this budget than there was before. So where is he getting his decrease from? Has he forgot some of the pages when it came time to do his adding? Or is he playing games? Is he attempting to not tell the whole story?

Well, let's go through, you go through the book, and you'll find: yes, there's a little less in agriculture . . . that in agriculture vote 1. And there is a little bit less in agriculture vote 2. But if you follow the book through, you will get into the heritage fund in the agriculture — well, there's a \$20 million increase. There was nothing there before. So let's put all the numbers on the paper, not just pick one page, vote 1 or vote 2. Let's put it all there.

As you were told, members, by this, this finance minister, that they have done something a little different by creating the heritage fund in agriculture. And so when you used to put your money for your land bank purchases in agriculture, and so forth, it's now in the, in our heritage fund for agriculture. So put all the numbers up, and not play games, and say, basically, there is an increase in the millions for farmers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, when I came to this House there was a document I kept hearing about. It was called the Regina Manifesto. Yes, and I'm going a ways back for the member from Regina, but I keep remembering that in that Regina Manifesto, you said things like: we believe that the evils must be removed in order of planned social economics, in which our national resources and principles of production are desired and owned.

By whom? Not by the average citizen; not by the . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — By the state.

**MR. KATZMAN:** — . . . farmer, but by your big government-styled ideas. By the state. 1933 — that was your principle, and you started to do it while you were government. You know, the Manifesto goes into more of the, more things besides that. But today we're dealing with the land purchase, land bank and those kinds of effects.

The member that spoke before me said nothing about irrigation. Hold it. The budget speech said something about it. It said about a department especially to work with water concerns. Is irrigation not part of water? You know, the member has got a real problem going. And I, I can understand his problem. But, being the negative type of group they are, and never being positive and looking for the good things, they only look for the negs.

Well, you know, the first member that spoke, from Assiniboia, I believe, seems to have forgot about part 2 of the *Saskatchewan Gazette*, January the 14th, 1983, which is called 'Revised Regulations of Saskatchewan,' chapter F-8, reg. 1, the Farm Purchase Program Act, section 12, and it continues, therefore . . . And under 3(1)(e) and (f), there is indications that the member from Assiniboia was not totally giving us all the facts when he said people were playing land changes. Because, specifically, (3) and (f) don't allow it. You can't do it; it's not allowed. I can't sell my land to somebody over there and he buy mine. It's not allowed. The only portion that it is allowed, because you have improved, is under (c). In applying for the rest of the . . . an amount of the loan that is

equal to the amount, net increase. Only if you increased could you get for that portion only.

So the fabricated story that he laid before us is not what the act says. They seems to differ. And I, I don't know what the member was trying to prove, or if his logic was not totally there. But the act is very, the regulations are very straightforward. You can't do it. But he tried to lay us on one that he said was happening. I challenge the member to prove it, because the act says he can't, you can't do it. And the regs say you can't do it. I challenge the member to bring an example. And if he can prove examples, fine, I'll apologize to him. But I ask him to bring examples of what he has accused the people of Saskatchewan of doing. And I know I don't have to worry about that, that apology because I'll never have to do that.

You know, he also said that it was helping the big farmer. Well, member for Shellbrook and other members that have spoke have talked about the regulations that stopped that where it's geared to help the small farmer, the father-to-son on transfer. You know, I hear some magic numbers coming around about costs, and the member from Morse in his delivery indicated about the fellow that was making approximately \$275,000 because he sold his land to the government and rented it back. And the difference between on the interest he received for the money he got from his land and what he paid interest was \$275,000. That's a pretty good deal. And you know, any free enterpriser might look at a good deal like that especially if it's a freebie.

But the pride to own land is what our forefathers and parents came to this country for. And under the farm purchase plan a father can pass to his son his land, and the government will assist to make that payment by bringing the, for the first five years, the going rate down to 8 per cent, and for the next, down to 12, so that the young farmer can buy his father's land. He doesn't have to sell to the big government.

Now it's also interesting to note that the member said there was \$500 million worth of equity in land bank. That's what it gained from what they paid for it and what it's worth today. Who did they gouge that out of? Because under their plan, they brought it from the father at a certain rate and as the market value went up, five years later, that's what the son or niece or member of the family was asked to pay for it. He didn't have the opportunity to get that gain. Or if the case may be a loss, that as well . . . (inaudible) . . . \$500 million — their increase. That's what he said. And yet he denies and he admits, he denies first of all, that that money would have gone to the son or the daughter if he would have bought it from his parents and he would not have to put out that kind of money cut. He was saved on that. He goes no further in explaining that basically the pride of ownership is what we want; the transfer of lands from family generations is what we want. He talks about everything except that. He talks about the big deals and the special deals and he goes into people and persons.

Mr. Speaker, I've a lot I'd love to say about this one, mainly because there was a lot of members in this House when we were in opposition who spoke about this kind of plan and how good it would be. But those gentlemen when they were government said it couldn't be done; it shouldn't be done. Well obviously the reason they don't want it done is the Regina Manifesto and their socialistic government, Big Brother, own-everything policy. I mean, it's in writing. And in this confusion of the facts by the member where he forgot about regulations and what they say, I don't think he's done his total research. He's just coming off the cuff and no facts, just flying, as they say, grabbing for something here and grabbing for something there, not sure that his facts are totally right.

As I indicated earlier, there is an increase in the budget. Under their former figures, it was 194 million-plus. And under our figures, it's 204 million-plus. And in my mathematics, that is an increase. In their mathematics, they think it's a decrease. But then of course, they're not very good at mathematics lately and April 26th showed the only thing they knew how to do is subtract members.

Mr. Speaker, I think before I adjourn the debate, and reply to some of the comments made earlier, I would like to go back to one of the comments made by the member from Morse as he opened his debate and he referred to a gentleman by the name of Mr. Jim Webster, who is a member of the Department of Agriculture, and his release *Agriculture '83*, 177, and where he indicates that 12,000 farmers . . . sorry. Webster says that by March 31, 1983 loans to 1,200 farmers to purchase 2,350 quarters of land worth \$250 million have been approved. He goes on in his release to comment about since January 1 and so forth down . . . how many replied, and how many have already been completed . . . The interesting thing is 2,488 of whom are considered eligible for the program.

Now, I have heard since I've been here from the NDP that 2,700 farmers that have been out farming; they have heard from our members about the 151 that actually bought the land. We have indicated our program has now got, 478 have now qualified for our program, and are in the program. So you can say 478 have bought, versus their 151. That's three months versus 10 years — not a bad comparison. But they keep flagging that 2,700 farmers. Well, I don't know what they're going to do three months from now, because if this program continues at the rate it's going, we will be near 5,000 that we have put on the farms.

So there's the problem. They're going to have nothing left to speak about because both their two criteria have been totally destroyed within probably six months, and that took them 10 years — so let's remember that! And, Mr. Speaker, I only make one more comment. I would ask the members from the opposition, when they come to their feet to speak, to make sure their facts are correct. I don't enjoy having to go get the regulations, and so forth, to always show them where they have gone wrong and try to mislead me. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I wish to adjourn debate so I can make some other comments later. Beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **Resolution No. 8 — VIA Rail Service**

**MR. SCHMIDT:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to urge this Assembly to encourage that VIA Rail service be restored to the communities of Melville and Ituna in my constituency, and in particular, in the constituency of Humboldt, to the town of Watrous. The problem with VIA Rail service started in 1981 when the federal government removed the super continental train which ran from eastern Canada through Winnipeg, Melville, Ituna, Watrous, Saskatoon, on to Edmonton, Jasper and Vancouver. Now we have a particular need for this train service in our constituency. One-third of the citizens of the city of Melville who are of voting age are senior citizens. There are many people who are CN pensioners who are not senior citizens but have retired at the age of 55 and up. The senior citizens have always used this train to be able to travel to Saskatoon and to Winnipeg, to eastern and western Canada. It's a cheap means of visiting their relatives. The passes for which CN employees worked for 35 years — and it's been given to them on retirement so they can travel on the train — are useless to them because the train has

been taken away.

This train has been taken away by the Liberal-NDP coalition in Ottawa. They did it without consultation; they did it without the use of common sense. And, while I'm a man who seldom loses his temper, I have to restrain myself on this topic because . . . Who did this to us in Melville and various other parts of Saskatchewan? It was none other than that villain and enemy of western Canada — Jean-Luc Pepin. Now, the name might sound familiar. He is the federal politician who shoots Crows and derails our train. This is not the type of man that we can tolerate in western Canada, nor anywhere else in Canada.

I want to tell you what he did do. He removed the train to cut expenses for VIA Rail, but, he didn't really cut expenses; he just removed the train from western Canada where it was used substantially and moved it to eastern Canada on the Quebec City to Windsor corridor. Well, he thought about it and he said, 'Well, we have to keep those fellows in the West happy one way or another; we'll give them a few crumbs.' So he gave us a little train. But, where does this little train run? It runs from Winnipeg to Brandon, to Regina, and then north to Saskatoon. It runs on the line where the only super continental or transcontinental train now runs. So, what did he do? He gave Brandon and Regina two trains, and they run about an hour apart; and, then he gave Melville, Watrous and Ituna no train. The train goes to the same place. It goes from Winnipeg to Saskatoon, but, it detours around my constituency.

Now, this would be all right if it made economic sense, but, I pointed out the second train, the little train, follows the main transcontinental train by about one hour, and therefore, an empty train follows the transcontinental, and it runs to Regina and then it goes from Regina to Saskatoon. Now, there was a rail-liner on from Regina to Saskatoon, and no one used it, and there wasn't any demand and nobody complained much when it was removed. But, he took the train from the Melville main line and put it on the line from Regina to Saskatoon where it's not used, and I can tell you it was used through Melville, Watrous and Ituna.

I would go to the train quite often because my little boy wanted to see it come and go. And we would watch the people come and go and there were usually 20 passengers getting on at Melville, and the train, when it ran through Melville was usually full or very close to full. It wasn't just people from Melville; it was people from Winnipeg going to Edmonton, going to Jasper, and going on to Vancouver.

So, with the lack of common sense, he gave us a little train in western Canada that no one uses and no one wants. For a year and a half now, we've tried to convince the federal government that they should put the little train back where it belongs, and that's on the line from Winnipeg directly to Saskatoon.

Now, I've talked to Ray Hnatyshyn, because I don't believe in simply making noise. I want to act as best possible. Now, Mr. Pepin doesn't understand when I contacted his office and when people of Melville contacted his office, and it could be because they've written him in English, but I've got a proposal. In my constituency office I have a secretary who comes from Drummondville, Quebec, and her French is very good, and I intend to write Mr. Pepin in French so that he understands what we're talking about. I've talked to Mr. Hnatyshyn, the MP for Saskatoon, and our federal party has clearly stated that we are in favour of restoring the trains of this land where it should have never been removed.

I want to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that in June I'm going to Ottawa. I'm going to spend \$1,500 out of my own pocket to go to the national PC convention, and I'm going not only to elect a new leader, but I'm going to influence our members to guarantee that our train is returned. And I can tell the members opposite and you, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . I see leadership touches a sore point among the members of the opposition.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — They have none.

**MR. SCHMIDT:** — Because they have none, and have no potential leaders.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SCHMIDT:** — Mr. Broadbent is staying on because nobody wants the job. But I am spending \$1,500 out of my own pocket to go down to assure the citizens of my constituency that our new leader, and our new prime minister, whether he be Brian Mulroney, John Crosbie, or Joe Clark, understands that we insist on being treated fairly in western Canada.

Now, when our train was removed, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we resisted in Melville. There was a train, the last train. It ran from Vancouver to eastern Canada, and members of various communities got on this train to support the last run, and to protest. There was a large crowd gathered at the station in Melville and I was there, mingling in the crowd with my family. But Lorne Nystrom, the leader of the gang of five, we all know who the gang of five is, the gang of five NDP federal members who sank the federal Conservative Party and brought back Jean-Luc Pepin. Lorne Nystrom and his gang of five, the leader himself there, the future leader of the Saskatchewan NDP as he likes to look at himself, he didn't see fit to ride this train all the way. He flew to Saskatoon and got on the train and tried to get off at Melville as a hero, and he looked like a hero for a while, but he hasn't done anything to help us get our train back.

The gang of five scuttled the only good government we've had in the last 20 years. There are 32 NDP members in Ottawa, and I can tell you with respect to western issues, they've been nothing but a nuisance to western Canada. I encourage you, Mr. Speaker, and fellow members, to list one useful item on which the federal NDP caucus has assisted western Canada, and I don't think you'll think of any. But we resisted, and the mayor of the city of Melville together with the president of the chamber of commerce went down to Ottawa and met with the eastern officials and, of course, they wouldn't listen to them because he spoke, but was sensible. They had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Pepin's officials and they gave them the usual deaf ear, but the people of Melville have continued to resist, and we continue to resist as a government.

We've asked for simple concessions. And I suggested: if you can't give us a train, then put a rail-liner on the main line and when it's full, then put on a short train, and when it's full, put on the long train. But for almost two years now, we've been talking to people with closed minds in Ottawa . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Speaker, I hear some encouragement, and it could be because we are not far from a federal election. But I hear some encouragement that VIA Rail is considering putting the train back for the summer. It's taken two years of resistance and common-sense arguments from the mayor of Melville, myself as MLA for Melville, from the Melville Chamber of Commerce, and the citizens of Melville generally, to convince them to go

back where they were and to use their heads and put a train back. I predict that the train will be back either before the next federal election as a carrot, but it won't fool us. But in any event, after the federal Conservatives come to power and we have a new Prime Minister in this country, I am sure we'll be treated fairly. Therefore, I encourage this Assembly to adopt the motion. I move, seconded by my colleague from Humboldt, Mr. Lou Domotor:

That this Assembly urges that VIA Rail service be restored to the communities of Melville, Ituna and Watrous.

**MR. DOMOTOR:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague, the member from Melville, on his articulate enunciation of the problems that occurred under the federal government removing federal VIA Rail services. It is certainly typical of the federal government under the guise of not being able to afford a service by cutting it out completely. This is a callous approach by the feds without regard for the people who use the services. As my colleague observed, the architect was none other than the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin, the same Monsieur Pepin who has orchestrated to destroy the statutory rate for Saskatchewan farmers. This is typical of the treatment we in the West have been receiving from the Trudeau-crats. We can't wait till the Liberal government is defeated and we have a new government that'll look after people, not only in the East but also in the West.

I'd like you to refer to the standing committee on transportation and communications in July, 1982 edition. And, at the bottom of page 2, the committee had a report:

The committee regards this type of drastic service cut as an unfortunate ad hoc response that has detrimental long-term ramifications for the passenger rail system in Canada. The committee believes that this sort of very important decision should not be made as a reflex reaction to a combination of circumstances that are foreseeable and should properly be the subject of well-reasoned long-term planning.

Furthermore, on the last paragraph on page 3, we have, and I'd like to just quote that:

By the implementation of order in council PC 1981-21-71, dated 6th of August, 1981, effectively one-fifth of the passenger routes served by VIA Rail Canada Incorporated were eliminated.

This ... These route reductions and abandonments, which were referred to by the minister as rationalization of passenger rail services, involved the elimination of some heavily travelled and very significant train services. The Minister of Transport, in testimony before this committee, spoke of the reasons, and he quoted the amount of money that was being spent. However, if the, if consideration would be taken, how much money was spent on Mirabel airport at the tune of 50-some-odd millions of dollars. Where has the railway service gone? Through the use of this section 64, the government could effectively eliminate passenger rail service, as it is now known, and seek to concentrate its railway resources in one or two geographical regions such as the Quebec-Windsor corridor.

Referring to the committee report:

The committee has significant reservations as to abandoning viable high-

ridership rail services to free funds to finance new equipment purchases. The costs involved, by dismantling VIA Rail in this area, are as follows.

A considerable number of jobs were lost, which forced VIA employees into early retirement or job reallocation, costing VIA approximately \$2 million to \$2.5 million. It has great implications for workers who will be affected directly plus countless other workers who are faced with relocation. In addition, a fund of \$30 million has been set aside for severance pay, retraining and relocation.

Another important consequence, in the committee's view, was the adverse effects on tourism and recreational travel in the absence of well travelled train routes used for sightseeing and conveying passengers during recreational seasons.

I'd like you to refer to October 22nd, 1981. Mazankowski is referring to this particular part.

He is also aware, I'm sure (he's referring to the minister), that the removal of the northern transcontinental will have a tremendous effect upon the tourist industry. I am sure he is aware there will be no direct service between Saskatoon and Winnipeg. The town of Rivers, Manitoba, will be deleted from the service and Watrous, Melville, will have no service at all. It is a very serious state of affairs.

And this was stated by the Hon. Don Mazankowski.

The abandonment has cost individuals, such as persons on fixed incomes, i.e. pensioners and students, who could not afford other modes of transportation. Hardships would be placed on those who live in geographically disadvantaged areas of the country, where individuals use the rail to maintain family contacts over long distances.

Transportation subsidies should be regarded as a form of investment in the development of the country. Long-term economic advantages and social consequences should also be carefully considered. (And this we can also refer to the fact with respect to the Crow rate also.) The problem with respect to utilization of transportation refers to the fact that in many instances the service was not provided at fullest capacity. This would result in less utilization and the consequence of this would give the government the opportunity to discontinue the service.

It is interesting to note that on page 12 of the VIA report, the committee recommends that light, rapid, comfortable train equipment be introduced in regular service, on routes in the Atlantic provinces and in western Canada, as soon as is practical. This, it says, should take place no later than '84, barring unforeseen technological impediments.

And I would encourage the federal government to go ahead and take a look at that report and try to get this implemented as soon as possible.

I would like to also refer you to a pamphlet on transport and communications, on page 1719. Mr. Tom Siddon, an MP, was referring to the usage of railways and how much . . . how significant rail passenger service is in saving us fuel costs in the future.



It says:

There are two main things that you must consider — two main factors. Trains are much more energy efficient in that they can obtain 300 to 400 passenger-miles per gallon. You know, Senator, that the passenger-mile rating on your automobile is from 20 to 80, depending on the number of passengers you are carrying. Buses do a little better — upwards of 200 passenger-miles per gallon. Incidentally, for Canada the airline average is 28 passenger-miles per gallon, and the airlines are using subsidized fuel, which is also used on trains. But a much greater portion of the airlines' budget is used in purchasing fuel, much of it imported from offshore.

So, in addition to being energy efficient, there is a tremendous advantage to moving more people in trains than has been the practice in recent years.

And just a little further on down the page he says:

You can get over 100 per cent occupancy. If we make a comparison on the basis of those facts alone, the airlines' load factor is not much higher than that of the VIA Rail system, being 65 per cent. The bus system is 53 per cent and the national average of VIA Rail is 51 per cent.

From the proceedings of the standing Senate committee on transport and communications, chaired by the Hon. George I. Smith, the basic recommendations were then:

Firstly, that the order in council be rescinded. Secondly, that a development of a national transportation policy be implemented to give a stronger commitment to VIA Rail in capital and modernization; a special select parliamentary committee to have full-scale inquiries and recommendations. And fourthly, the costing order R-6313 should be revised to, as to put VIA on a basis similar to that which exists between Amtrak and railways in United States. (And refer to October 16th, 17171, for Mazankowski's quote — October 26th, rather:)

The fact that VIA Rail was established by a stroke of a pen through a . . . (inaudible) . . . has disallowed that opportunity to Canadians. It has prevented the Parliament of Canada from establishing a mandate with goals and objectives which would govern the operation of VIA Rail, who does not have the necessary bargaining power at the present time.

In the House of Commons, we had several members question the minister as to his doing away with the VIA Rail service. We had, for example, this Sinclair Stevens referring to the cost where it was mentioned before about Mirabel. Also the fact that there had been some money spent in eliminating other departments. The fact that there was money spent on the Bonaventure that was a waste of money. And these type of things which should have been implemented into VIA.

We also have in November 5th from the House of Commons debate, we have Mazankowski referring to a question:

In the light of legal confusion which surrounds the whole matter, the action

of the cities of Melville and Watrous and Transport 2000, in light of the fact that St. John, New Brunswick, will be launching a legal action, and the city of Edmonton, the province of Alberta and perhaps a group in Ontario will launch similar actions seeking an injunction on the proposal to discontinue 20 per cent of the rail passenger service in this country, plus there is the potential of the Interstate Commerce Commission in the state of Maine taking action. Why will the minister not now defer the date of implementation and refer the matter to appropriate courts?

And Mr. Pepin answers:

I have apparently no reason to do that.

Totally ignoring the concerns of the members and of the people in the West — not only West but also in the East.

These are some of the concerns that were expressed by members of opposition and I would like to support the motion that my hon. colleague from Melville has initiated.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all say that the intent of the resolution as put before us and before the House, that this Assembly urge VIA Rail service be restored to the communities of Melville, Ituna and Watrous, certainly we can agree with the intent of the resolution. But I want to draw to the attention of the House the problem with the government opposite and the problem that is demonstrated by those two eastern-based federal parties, the Tories and the Liberals.

I want to say that they are the servants of the CPR. And as a consequence, it is very difficult for them, as a party, to institute a transportation policy which would make sense for the people of this country.

I want to say that in respect to the industrialized countries of the world, if you go to Great Britain, you have a nationalized transportation system; if you go to West Germany, you have a nationalized transportation system. You have a system which is the network throughout the country to provide services and to provide a rational service to the industry within the country. But not here, Mr. Speaker. Here we have bits and pieces of policies put together — no overall plan for a rational transportation system for the, for the nation. And just as with the VIA Rail, the federal Liberals, supported by the Tory . . . eastern wing of the Tory party have been making the policies. Certainly if you look at the issue of the Crow rate, when we put forward that possibility if you're going to pay and build the tracks and upgrade them, that you should nationalize them in the interests of the country. But not the Tories, not the Liberals. They pick out little, little, little problems, and then start saying that this should be done.

But obviously, what you have to do is to have a transportation policy. Certainly, the federal Tories will not present a national transportation policy, nor will the eastern-based Liberals for western Canada. If you take a look at the question of VIA Rail, the terms of the contracts that were entered into by VIA Rail with the CPR were so severe that the possibility of VIA Rail ever making a financial success of any of the runs which they established was next to none.

The government of the day, the Liberals, and for a short time the Tory government, entered into these deals to establish VIA Rail. And certainly, as I said, the terms under which VIA Rail were established, the hand-outs that were given to the CPR were of such a nature that the success of VIA Rail was next to impossible.

But I want to say that in respect to the, the problems which we have, it's not just a loss of VIA Rail. We have the whole question of rail line abandonment; we have the question of the Crow rate; we have the whole policies emanating from eastern Canada, affecting western Canada. And it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that really what we should be having as a resolution is a firm transportation policy for Canada.

I want to say in respect to the efforts of our government prior to April the 26th, I want to say that undoubtedly the New Democratic government, back in November of '81, joined with Transport 2000 and communities of Melville and Watrous in launching a court challenge against the service reductions. The federal court in Regina ruled Ottawa had the right to go ahead with the cuts by order in council, holding no public hearings or Commons debate.

In September of '82, the (pardon me) . . . In September of '82, the court of appeal, Mr. Speaker, overturned this decision. In October of '82, Transport 2000 forwarded to Ottawa three proposals for the restoration of passenger rail service. So what I want to put on the record is that the New Democratic Party in Saskatchewan was indeed actively supporting the maintaining, maintenance of the VIA Rail runs through the communities mentioned in the resolution.

I want to go on, Mr. Speaker, and to clarify some of the misrepresentations of the member from Melville, who, I think, strayed very far in his attack on the New Democratic parties and members of parliament. And accordingly, I think that I should have the latitude to be able to wander in the same direction that he did. And accordingly, I beg leave to adjourn the debate at this time.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:05 p.m.