

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Thursday, March 22, 1984

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.
Prayers

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

CLERK: — On December 12, the sitting day just before the Assembly rose for Christmas, Mr. Glauser presented a petition. I now hereby, under rule 11(7), read and receive and lay on the table the following petition:

Of the Crown Trust Company and the Central Trust Company paying for an act to effect the substitution of Central Trust Company for Crown Trust Company as fiduciary and investing of property associated with the said trusts in Central Trust Company.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. BOUTIN: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to this Legislative Assembly, a group of 28 students from Cudworth, Saskatchewan, in the good Kinistino constituency, and also Mrs. Sholter, Mrs. Haines, and Mr. Greenwold, sitting in the west gallery I would like to also say that after question period at 2:30 on the second floor by the rotunda, we'll be available for pictures and then for drinks in the members' lounge. Thank you.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SVEINSON: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to the Assembly this afternoon a group of 35 students from St. Jerome School in Regina. They're in the west gallery, and they're accompanied by teachers Chris Hamilton and Peter Bresciani. I'll meet with you after question period for pictures and drinks and would look forward to seeing you then. Thank you very much.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to introduce to you, and to the hon. members of this Assembly, grades 7 and 9 students and their teachers and chaperones, Dennis Peters, Larry Ahenatein, and John Halkett. These students and the teachers are from La Ronge. They are sitting in the east gallery. This group of young people, Mr. Speaker, arrived in Regina earlier this week. They will be leaving later this afternoon. I know that they, like all students who visit Regina, have had a busy and interesting time. I hope that their visit will be both educational and instructive. I'd like to ask all hon. members in joining with me in welcoming this group of students from La Ronge.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Services at Valley View Centre and North Park Centre

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Social Services. My question deals with the large number of cuts in this budget for people programs, particularly for services to people who are unable to protect themselves. We see a huge deficit — a deficit which is costing taxpayers \$11,000 an hour — yet we see deep cuts in services to people. Let me ask you, sir: how do you defend cuts in psychiatric services, particularly at the Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw, of more than 60, and cuts in staff at North Park Centre in Prince Albert, of more than 20 positions?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, in last evening's budget address the Minister of Finance made it very clear that that which needs keeping will be kept, and that which needs changing will be changed.

Mr. Speaker, the services at Valley View and the services at North Park are very important services, and we have no intention of seeing those services reduced. We, in fact, are going to be enhancing those services. Mr. Speaker, in the next few weeks I am going to be making some major announcements regarding the enhancement of program delivery at Valley View.

Mr. Speaker, regarding the question of positions at Valley View and North Park, a great number of the positions which the member opposite referred to are, in fact, being transferred from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Supply and Services, where they more rightly belong.

The other positions – and I believe we're talking about approximately 45 positions in that regard, Mr. Speaker – are temporary positions which would have come to an end anyway, and there were some vacant positions which were unencumbered. So, in fact, there will be no job abolitions at Valley View or North Park.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Minister. You have already conceded that the cuts in staff at Valley View and North Park are upwards of 80 people. You tell me that they are being transferred to Supply and Services. Would you be good enough to advise the House why the number of employees in Supply and Services has increased, not by 80, but by six?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I could take the time of the House again to reiterate, very carefully, the answer that I just gave the member opposite about what is happening to positions at Valley view and North Park.

I think the question with regard to positions in the Department of Supply and Services should be more appropriately directed to my colleague, the minister in charge.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — A supplementary to the Minister of Social Services. I wonder if he would be good enough to provide for us the list of the 80 positions which are moving, the job description, and the names of the individuals, so that we can get to the bottom of these 80 people who are being either fired or moved to another department.

The reason that I will need that information is because last year, when we went through the process of Valley View, we found out that information given in the House was not accurate. And I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, whether or not you will give us a list of where those 80 positions, in fact, have gone?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, two things in response. First of all, let me make it very clear because the member opposite didn't seem to hear my first answer. No one is being fired. No encumbered position is being abolished at Valley View or North Park, so make sure you do not mislead or confuse the public in that regard.

Secondly, the specific details regarding numbers of jobs that are going to be transferred, and positions that are involved is, I think, more appropriately a question for estimates, and we'll be providing that information at the appropriate time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I'll try to get another answer out of the minister in a new question. I notice that the day care centres – and I want the minister to know what question I'm asking – the day care centres, the funding to the centres has been cut by 12 per cent in this budget. I would like to know, Mr. Minister, what area the centres are going to be cut. Is it in the food for the children, the hating, or in the number of staff? Where are they expected to cut the

12 per cent out of the day care facilities?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, I can see that the members opposite are already taking the low road. I think that's very unfortunate. Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. The minister.

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite had read through the *Estimates* book last night very carefully they would have seen — and I am pleased to inform the members of this Assembly and, indeed, all of the people of Saskatchewan — that, in fact, the overall amount of money being spent on day care, allocated in the 1984-85 budget by this government, is increasing by 9.5 per cent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Check your *Estimates* book. Check your *Estimates* book and you will find out that, in fact, that is the figure. The member opposite is likely referring to the question of grants. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this year \$700,000-plus were actually expended on day care grants. We expect to increase the amount of money allocated to day care grants by 26 per cent in 1984-85.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I have here the budget document, page 79, and I would like to ask the minister which of these numbers is not accurate. Whether or not the estimates for '83-'84 which says \$1.077 million were spent on day care grants, if that is an accurate number in your budget last year . . . You can't have it both ways. Either you budgeted wrong last year and didn't spend the money and did the vicious cutting in day care last year which will continue this year, or else you're misleading the House. These are your numbers, not mine, and I want to know whether or not the cuts that are announced here, what areas they'll take place in in the day care centres.

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate. There will be no cuts in day care expenditures. There will be increases in the magnitude of 9.5 per cent overall, and in the order of 26 per cent in monies actually spent over last year. The budget figure that you were referring to, in fact, was not all spent for two reasons.

Number one, there was a reduction in the expected number of day car spaces that were asked for. In other words, people that were originally intending on applying for new centre spaces never did so, and we had budgeted, expecting that that would happen. It didn't happen.

Secondly, there was approximately \$175,000 in the northern day care budget in grants which actually should have been in allowances. And, when you take that into consideration, the overall dollars spent this year would be 26 per cent more than those spent last year.

Aid to Saskatchewan Farmers

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Last night your government attempted to convince the Saskatchewan farmers that this budget has something concrete for them, but in fact when you add up the entire increases in agricultural budget, Mr. Speaker, and you divide it by the number of farmers, you come to about \$280 a farmer. And much of that increase is in the form of increased bureaucracy and not direct aid to farmers. I ask you: why didn't your government provide some direct and immediate aid for every farmer in Saskatchewan by introducing a 32-cent-a-gallon fuel rebate which now exists in Alberta? That could have saved hundreds and thousands of dollars for Saskatchewan farmers. Why wasn't this rebate in the budget? Why didn't you give farmers the same kind of priority as you gave the oil companies?

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — Mr. Speaker, the budget that the Minister of Finance brought down last night . . . And just before I answer that question, I would like to congratulate him for what was indeed a masterful budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — And I congratulate him on behalf of all the farmers of Saskatchewan because, if the calls coming into my office today are any indication, the hon. member is sadly out of touch with what the farmers view that budget as out there. That budget is a combination, Mr. Speaker, of providing a safety net for the farm community out there for those who are facing difficult times, and as well, on the other side, Mr. Speaker, as acknowledgement of what agriculture can do in terms of being the economic engine for the recovery in this province.

And to outline both sides for the hon. member, in the event that he did not hear what was said in the speech last night, or that he was otherwise indisposed, I will go over that for him. On the safety net side, we have indirect payments to farmers, Farm Purchase Program – an increase from 6.5 million last year to \$13.5 million this year, going to . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — And, Mr. Speaker, this is so they can own their land, so they can become masters of their own destiny. They are no longer competing with the biggest purse in the land any more when they go out to buy land – the land bank purse. It's gone, Mr. Speaker. And if nothing else, the farmers of Saskatchewan, if we have done nothing else as Tories in this province, they are still happy for us having done that one major thing in this province.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the rebate of the low interest rate loan to the Agricultural Credit corporation of Saskatchewan provides another \$4.85 million in interest-rate relief for farmers out there.

As well, the fund for farmers in financial difficulties, \$4 million.

As well, the school tax rebate on the home quarter – security for the family farm — \$11 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — . . . \$11 million. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to anticipate his next question, in that he talked about the Farm Cost Reduction Program and the fuel tax rebates as they have in Alberta. Mr. Speaker, I will stack up that reduction farm cost with that one measure alone, the school tax home quarter rebate, against any fuel rebate you gave the farmers in this province, ever, during your term – ever!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — And, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't include the additional component in the safety net, the removal of the 5 per cent E&H tax on SPC electricity bills.

As well, on the development side, thrusts in irrigation – a Livestock Investment Tax Credit. And the Livestock Investment Tax Credit is the same kind of principle, Mr. Speaker, that's behind RRSP funds in this province, that spurred the oil industry on, and the same kind of principle, Mr. Speaker, that farmers have used out there for years. They looked at . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. I'm going to caution all hon. members that question period is a time for short questions and short answers, and I would ask both sides to adhere to that.

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I asked a very short question. I said: why didn't you give the farmers 30 cents a gallon? If he'd buy 1,000 gallons of fuel, he'd have saved \$300. The programs you've talked about, the farm purchase plan, is for a guy buying land. They want to hold on to what they've got. My question is: why don't you give the farmer something to stay in farming, to stay in business? Not to save income tax; they're not paying income tax. I don't have farmers telling me about how much income tax they're paying. I want to know how they're going to pay their fuel bill? Mr. Speaker, my question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — The hon. member indicated a short question, and if you have a short one, we'll take it now.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, the short question is this. If a farmer buys 1,000 gallons of fuel in Alberta he saves \$300. Okay. You can save \$67 if you own one quarter of land in . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order please! The member is making a speech, and not asking a question. I would move on to the next question.

MR. ENGEL: — A new question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, if a farmer owns a quarter of land that he's living on, that's assessed at \$800, how much will he get under your program, total? Total, with all the grants he 's got coming, if his home quarter is assessed at \$800 — a short question — how much will he get?

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — If the hon. member is referring to what the size of the school taxes he would, in fact, be paying on that home quarter, I couldn't give him a definitive answer on that, because it varies across the country depending on each school division's needs and requirements. However, if he has a specific quarter, like the one he's living on, I would suggest he take his tax notice, and look what it will say under school taxes, and that will be the number that's deducted or rebated to him.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, the question I have for the minister is this. I won a quarter of land that's worth \$4,000. The mill rate's 100 mills. I'm going to save \$400. My neighbour, that needs it, owns a quarter of land assessed at \$800, is going to get \$80. Is that right, or isn't it? The one that needs it will get \$80, and the one that doesn't need it'll get \$400.

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — The short, simple answer, Mr. Speaker, is that whatever the school taxes are on the home quarter, they will be eliminated.

MR. ENGEL: — One more question, Your incentive program encourages livestock intensive feeding — livestock intensive feeding. In the budget last night you didn't mention cuts; you forgot to mention the cuts. What about the cut in control of pollution control, from 337,000 to 80,000? Do you expect more intensified livestock operations, or don't you? Why would you cut it by 400 per cent?

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — Mr. Speaker, that question I don't have the full details on, but will be happy to address it in *Estimates*. You may well find out that it does impact somewhat on another branch of government, namely Environment; and, secondly, you may find out that it also has something to do with a particular agreement that was in place for a particular area in the province, and was on a sliding scale.

Northern Self-Sufficiency

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Premier. My question deals with the PC government's abandonment of northern Saskatchewan and northern people. Since he took office two years ago, unemployment and welfare caseloads in the North have sky-rocketed. Rather than help Northerners to help themselves, you have simply washed your hands of the North — abandoned the North and its people.

Yesterday's budget is just the latest example. The former Minister of Northern Saskatchewan, Mr. McLeod, has talked about a program of economic self-sufficiency for the North. I ask the Hon. Premier: how do you expect Northerners to become self-sufficient economically, when this budget contains a 12 per cent cut in job training for Northerners, and also, furthermore, an 85 per cent cut in grants for northern economic development?

Could the Premier please square these kinds of cuts with his government's claim that it wants to help northern people help themselves?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, we have always said that the northern half of Saskatchewan will become part of the entire province of Saskatchewan. The areas identified in the budget by the Minister of Finance include major incentives or new programs or, indeed, new money in the areas of mining, which includes northern Saskatchewan; forestry and reforestation, which includes northern Saskatchewan; agriculture, which includes northern Saskatchewan; health care, which is increased to a large extent in northern Saskatchewan; the new venture capital projects, which will include things like tourism, which have a major impact on northern Saskatchewan; and, if I recall the figures correctly, a significant and substantial increase in job training throughout Saskatchewan, and particularly for northern Saskatchewan. So we include northern Saskatchewan in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier likes to deal in slogans rather than specifics. What the Premier seems to have trouble understanding though, Mr. Speaker, is that you can't put brown sugar on slogans and feed them to your kids for breakfast. To do that, people need jobs, and that's what your government has failed to provide for our Northerners.

I ask the Hon. Premier, Mr. Speaker, to answer me specifically: how are northern people going to be better prepared for jobs if your government is cutting back on job-training programs for Northerners and economic development?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, clearly every one of the measures that I just talked about, and outlined by the Minister of Finance, is designed to create jobs. Certainly in the budget last night there was not an announcement, as professed by those on the other side, that we would close all the mines in northern Saskatchewan. We didn't say that. We are encouraging mining and exploration and development, encouraging forestry, which is bound to encourage economic activity and provide opportunities for people all across Saskatchewan. But because a great deal of forestry and mining, particularly, and tourism is in northern Saskatchewan, most of it will be there. Those kinds of programs are designed specifically to provide job opportunities for people in communities all across northern Saskatchewan. Now if they're not, Mr. Speaker, then I don't know where mining, forestry, agriculture, some of these job-training programs will occur. I'm sure it will be in the North.

MR. YEW: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ask the Hon. Premier if you do have any specific figures as to number of jobs, opportunities, that will become available to Northerners, number of training opportunities, and the number of funds earmarked with small business in northern Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, the programs that we apply to the province will have a various impact in the city of Estevan. They'll have a certain impact in Meadow Lake. They'll have a different kind of impact on La Ronge, and for me to give you the exact impact of the agriculture and forestry and mining and health and venture capital and training programs might have on exactly the number of jobs in either Estevan or Lac la Biche or any place else is virtually impossible. I will say that these programs, as they're designed, will be able to . . . people will be

able to take part in them in northern Saskatchewan as well as they can anyplace else. But to give you the exact number is virtually impossible.

MR. YEW: — A new question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier knows full well that the unemployment rate in northern Saskatchewan now exceeds 95 per cent in many of the northern communities. Can you give me round specific figures as to how your government will intend to knock down that high unemployment rate in northern Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, perhaps we can extend the question to across northern Canada. Unemployment is high in northern Manitoba. Unemployment is high in northern Ontario. Unemployment is high across northern Alberta and B.C. — right across the country. We are focusing on particularly, Mr. Speaker, job training: the matching of the skills of individuals to the market-place. All across northern Saskatchewan there is a real task ahead, and that is to increase the skills of individuals to match a lot of employment opportunity. If we expand mining, forestry, agriculture and so forth, tourism venture capital projects, people must be trained well enough to take advantage of them. That's why in this budget we see such a significant increase in training for people, the increase in technical school capacity, the increase in education, so that we can better match individual skills with the market opportunities which I believe, Mr. Speaker, will not take a second place to any place in Canada, perhaps even in North America.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan, the Hon. George McLeod, wrote members of his staff in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan during the dismantling process. On a July 16 letter, dated 1982, he talked about an economic self-sufficiency program strategy for Northerners. Where is that program strategy of economic development for Northerners? The question was directed to the member for Meadow Lake.

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know that anyone could reiterate any more than what the Premier has just answered to the hon. member regarding the way in which we take northern Saskatchewan, that region of Saskatchewan, and make that part of the whole of Saskatchewan. People asked that to happen. Whether the hon. member from Cumberland ever wants to admit it or not, the people of Saskatchewan asked that northern Saskatchewan become a part of this province. We have done that, and that is the way it is now.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Job Creation Initiatives

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see I had some competition from the other side just now, when I got up — the member for Regina Centre. He has a reputation for being a wit. Mr. Speaker, they're only half correct.

Mr. Speaker, two of the budget's job creation initiatives, Saskatchewan Opportunities '84 and Access Youth Employment, which will be run through the Department of Advanced Education and manpower, are a major part of this government's commitment to creating jobs for youth in Saskatchewan. These programs respond to the needs of our young adults who require employment opportunities, and to our students who want to help themselves pay for a post-secondary education.

Saskatchewan Opportunities '84 is a \$2.74 million program, which is expected to create 2,600 jobs in a variety of sectors in the provincial economy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — The three months maximum term employer subsidy of \$350 per month for each job created will be available to farmers, business people, non-profit organizations, municipalities, and other local governments. Eligible students include permanent residents of Saskatchewan who are at least 16 years of age, and who are enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution for the next academic year.

Access Youth Employment is a new and exciting program in my department. The program is aimed at creating jobs for young Saskatchewan adults between the ages 15 to 24. Access Youth Employment is a \$3 million program aimed at putting youth into jobs over the longer term — 24 to 30 weeks. Through a wage subsidy of \$2.50 per hour, employers will be encouraged to create incremental positions for unemployed youth. We anticipate the creation of 1,000 positions for people between the ages 15 to 24.

Eligible employers include farmers, business people, non-profit organizations, and local government organizations. Potential job beneficiaries of the program must be registered with, and will be drawn from, Canada Employment Centre eligibility lists. Mr. Speaker, both of these programs reflect our concern for, and our commitment to, Saskatchewan youth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, I want to take the opportunity to thank the minister for sending me across a copy of the report just prior to his reading of it, and I appreciate that.

I want to say that certainly any initiatives taken by the government to increase youth employment is a welcome step. I say youth employment is of a major concern in this province. It's at 15.7 per cent, so obviously we welcome any thrust.

I'm rather interested in that the Minister of Finance recently indicated that many of the short-term job creation programs had not worked, that indeed they had failed. Those are the comments of the Minister of Finance. He says what we have to be doing is looking for long-term job creation. I want to say that, in respect to the initiative here today, that these jobs will not be specifically relevant to university and college people, and students seeking career-related employment. I think the rhetoric of this government appears to be one of concern, but that the economic policies which they have put in place have been a total disaster.

I know last year there's many students in the Humboldt area. And if you're an engineering student, first or second year engineering student, I know that painting a park bench may be a job, but it's not very relevant to that young person's career development. I think what this government has failed is that what the young people of this province want and need is an economic policy that puts them in the mainstream of our society, an opportunity for full and meaningful employment.

It's rather ironic that the Minister of Agriculture Education, whose officials prepared a document not long ago indicating that high unemployment will continue, and he went on to say that it would be socially acceptable . . . If we look, last year this government promised 20,000 jobs. And do you know what? The records indicate, if you look at Statistics Canada, that only 4,000 were created — the eighth worst performance in all of Canada. I want to refer the minister here to a document out of the Executive Council, and it relates to employment in respect to young people, the group that he's talking about, the group from 15 to 24.

In February of 1983, there was 95,000 young people employed. In February of 1984, there was 92,000 employed. I want to say that the young people of this province listened to a campaign some two years ago, a campaign where the Premier went around . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. Order, please. Order. The member, I believe, is ranging pretty wide on this, and I would ask him to get back to the comments that were made by the minister, and to recall that this is a reply to a ministerial statement, which should be kept brief.

MR. KOSKIE: — And to conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that the record clearly indicates that this government has failed in job creations. There are 3,000 less jobs this year in February from last year. I want to indicate that their rhetoric sounds good, but their performance is lousy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BILL No. 29 – An Act to amend The Residential Tenancies Act

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I move first reading of a bill to amend The Residential Tenancies Act. The bill, I might say, is more necessary now than when I gave notice three and one-half months ago.

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: — Before Orders of the Day, pursuant to section 14(a) of The Provincial Auditor Act, I received a copy of the auditor's report, and under section 14(b), I now lay this report on the table.

CONDOLENCES

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Before Orders of the Day, I would like to take this opportunity to move, seconded by the hon. member from Regina Elphinstone:

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of the Assembly, and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and his province.

Clarence George Willis, who died on February the 15th, 1984, in White Rock, British Columbia, at the age of 77, was a member of the legislature for the constituency of Melfort-Tisdale from 1951 to 1970. He was born at Dauphin, Manitoba, and received his education at Dauphin and Saskatoon, where he obtained a teaching certificate. He was a farmer, served as president of the Melfort Agricultural Society from 1948 to 1951, and was a trustee of the Melfort School Unit No. 54 from 1945 to 1951. During his career as a member of the Legislative Assembly, he served as Minister of Public Works from 1956 to 1960, and Minister of Highways and Transportation from 1960 to 1964. In addition, I want to note that in the first capacity, he was responsible for the Saskatchewan research lab, the Animal Husbandry Building, and the Biological Building on campus of the University of Saskatchewan. In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

MR. HODGINS: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing my condolences to the family of the late George Willis.

I cannot say that I knew Mr. Willis personally, but I do know that he was very highly thought of,

and very much respected in our community. Certainly I believe his tenure in this legislature would be a testimony to that.

On behalf of myself and all of the constituents of the Melfort constituency, please accept both our condolences to the family and our expression of appreciation for the great contribution made by the late George Willis.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my word of condolence and remembrance to those already addressed to the House.

I knew George Willis. I knew him well. I served in the legislature with him for 10 years, and in the cabinet with him for four years, and I had known him somewhat prior to my election when I was a public servant, and he was a member of this legislature.

As has already been indicated, George served in the cabinet as Minister of Public Works and Minister of Highways. Reference has already been made to some of the buildings which were built when he was Minister of Public Works.

Some others included the Saskatchewan Training School at Moose Jaw, and there was some work done on that when George was minister; the University Hospital and nursing residence, and a good deal was done on that when George was minister; the Murray Memorial Library at the University of Saskatchewan.

In those days, and now again, buildings at the University of Saskatchewan were built by the Department of Public Works. The Museum of Natural History at Regina was built, in part at least, during his tenure as Minister of Public Works.

And then, when he was Minister of Highways the program of four-laning began, and the first four-lane highway in the province, of any particular substance, the stretch between Regina and Lumsden with the overpasses over No. 6, were constructed during George's period as minister.

I served in the cabinet at that time and remember the discussions surrounding whether or not the construction of four-lane highways was appropriate when we had a number of rural highways which needed attention. And it was recognized that four-lane highways were certainly going to be with us, and we ought to provide for them, certainly adjacent to our major cities and, one would hope, for other distances.

I mention those matters about George as a minister. I recall very much his period in opposition. George was a very able debater in this House. He was almost a classic "ragger of the puck," and if anyone wants to understand how an opposition can prolong debate on matters which they do not wish to see come to a vote quickly, I recommend that members might look up George Willis's speech on the bill with respect to deterrent fees, which was something vigorously opposed by us when in opposition; and a bill with respect to granting substantial municipal tax concessions to the Prince Albert Pulp Company Ltd.

If one wants to know how far one can go without tempting Mr. Speaker to come from his chair but still being just in order and proceeding at some considerable length, as he certainly did on the deterrent fee issue, one can find out. George felt very strongly on the matter of utilization fees, or deterrent fees, and he used the rules of the House to make his point known.

George, as was indicated, was a good constituency person, and it was my impression that he was well-regarded in Melfort, well-regarded both as a person, and as a person who served his constituents. I felt, and one knows which MLA's are doing well with their constituents and which are not, and I would put George in the category of those who was well-regarded and felt to be, by his constituents, a good public servant.

George was an even-tempered person who was pleasant to be with. He contracted ill health, and resigned his seat in this House in 1970 because of ill health. And I know that it grieved him a good deal to wrestle with whether or not he should continue his term of office which was likely to expire in the next year (and in fact the election was in 1971 widely anticipated), or whether he should resign one year before an election when he felt he no longer could adequately serve his constituents. And he made the latter choice feeling that when his health did not permit him to do the job he wished to do, that he ought to resign and provide an opportunity for another person to be chosen. He bore his ill health patiently, and it dogged him from the time that he resigned in 1970 until his death short weeks ago.

I want to extend my condolences to Mrs. Willis – to Jean, and to other members of the family, and to express my thanks for his contribution to this province as a member of the legislature, and in other ways in which he served the public of this province.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition:

That the resolution just passed, together with the transcripts of oral tributes to the memory of the deceased member, be communicated to the bereaved family on behalf of this Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Not Debatable)

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I would move that under motions for return, that the motions for return (not debatable) numbered 38 through 61 be converted to motions for return (debatable).

MR. SPEAKER: — Debate.

MOTIONS

Resolution No. 6 – Services to Senior Citizens

MS. ZAZELENCHUK: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure today to speak on a motion commending the provincial government on initiatives it has taken on behalf of senior citizens. Certainly when I say the government, I mean all government members, but probably in particular the Minister of Social Services, the Hon. Gordon Dirks. And we also appreciate the work by the Hon. Patricia Smith when she was in that department, and I believe both continue to be excellent ministers. It is a pleasure for me to work with the new Minister of Social Services. He has a genuine interest in all aspects of his department, and this is certainly evident in the work he is doing.

I have here a list of initiatives undertaken by the department, such things as review of The Family Services Act, providing an increase in family income plan benefit, an increase in foster care rates, funding over 3,000 jobs through the job creation program. And there are many more, Mr. Speaker, but today I'd like to focus on initiatives we have taken on behalf of senior citizens.

Our genuine interest leads us to look for better ways to have things done, and I am hearing from people constantly around the province that we have perhaps now the most accessible Minister of Social Services, and most accessible Deputy Minister of Social Services that this province has ever seen. And again I thank the Hon. Patricia Smith for beginning that work in that department.

The minister, myself, and other government colleagues participated in a seniors' conference the department sponsored in Saskatoon in October of last year. The Minister of Social Services, very soon after accepting his new responsibilities, initiated this seniors' forum. It was attended by seniors from every constituency in the province (Mary Korchynsky and June Clark attended from my constituency), and these individuals were asked to give the government input on a variety of areas – education for themselves, transportation, health services, housing, and community services. Always they pertained particularly to senior citizens.

This was done because of a genuine interest by all government members, and the minister especially, to work with seniors during his full term in office – so different from the attention, or the lack of attention, senior citizens received by the former government.

Considering the gratitude senior citizens should receive for building this province, and the wisdom they've probably gained in the process, the NDP strongly suggested to them at times that among the things the Conservative government would do would be to destroy medicare, take away medicare. Not only is it a disappointing thing to hear when you're involved in politics, but what a disgusting thing, I thought, to do to our senior citizens. But as you know, Mr. Speaker, per capita spending for health is at its highest level ever in the history of this province, and we offer the widest range of medical services under medicare than any other province in Canada.

The NDP members make all sorts of criticisms regarding the services we provide to seniors. However, we should remind the opposition of their record with regard to seniors, and discuss an issue that was important to the people at that seniors' conference. In 1975, an election year, single seniors received a supplement of \$20 and married couples a supplement of \$36, and in 1976, after the election, the rate remained the same. In 1977, not an election year, the rate was increased \$5. In 1979 the seniors did not receive an increase. In 1980 the seniors did not receive an increase. In 1981 the seniors did not receive an increase. Under the former administration, in seven consecutive years, the seniors received only one increase to the amount of \$5, and that was during an election year. I think that's very important, and I want to repeat that again. Under the former administration, in seven consecutive years, the seniors received only one \$5 increase, and that was during an election year. Well, Mr. Speaker, a better finance minister announced last night effective . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. There'll be plenty of time for all of you to speak. Give the member on her feet the opportunity.

MS. ZAZELENCHUK: — Well, Mr. Speaker, a better Minister of Finance announced last night that effective July 1, 1984 the rate for singles will be doubled from \$25 to \$50 per month . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. ZAZELENCHUK: — And the rate for couples will be increased from \$45 to \$75 per month.

I want also to remind members that the former government placed a moratorium on the construction of senior citizen nursing homes. Well, our government spent more on nursing homes in 18 months than the former government did in eight years. Now that's a record this administration can be proud of, and this particular motion has been on the legislative agenda since December of 1983. And if we had had the opportunity to discuss this motion earlier, and the comments from the seniors at the seniors' conference, that is a good record to talk about. But it would be appropriate to introduce a similar motion to discuss this issue again, because this government steadily listens to senior citizens and acts on the recommendations.

As I said earlier, and as the Minister of Finance said last night, in the five years prior to our coming to power only 142 new nursing home beds were provided. In our first two budgets this government provided over 190 new beds. So, in two years, we've exceeded the five-year record

of the former government. But as we realized, and as senior citizens across the province told us, there is still a need for more nursing home beds.

Now, most provinces will not have as many senior citizens in Saskatchewan has now, and they probably won't for maybe 20 to 25 years. This requires more serious consideration on the part of our government, but more importantly, implementing solutions and the recommendations of senior citizens themselves, and this administration is the best one to accommodate those senior citizens.

I listened with a great deal of pleasure to the budget address last night when it was announced we're beginning a five-year, \$25 million nursing home construction project, which will add 1,000 new nursing home beds and replace 500 existing ones. Again, significant action to address a need, and in compliance with what senior citizens recommended at the conference.

We certainly know natives and Northerners aren't new to Saskatchewan, yet the former Senior Citizens' Provincial Council did not include representation from native seniors or northern Saskatchewan, even though most of all the members on the government side – NDP government members – were from northern Saskatchewan. Our new council does include native seniors and seniors from the North. So in addition to the members, other members, we welcome the contributions of Ernest Crowe from Regina and Bella Finlayson of La Ronge.

The seniors' council has been broadened to include 15 members, up from the former council of 11 members, and broadened because it now includes representation from Action Now, one of the two largest senior citizens' organizations in this province. We are proud to have Frances Petit join the council and work in that capacity. The other large seniors' organizations, Saskatchewan Seniors Association Incorporated, is also represented on the council by two members.

I understand Action Now had been canvassing the former government for years, repeatedly, to be given that type of recognition. This is characteristic of the former government, either acting prematurely without consulting the public, or not acting upon the comments we are only too glad to accept.

There has been a communications gap between seniors and the government, and this is probably more true between the government and those seniors who do not belong to an organized group. Expansion of the council will alleviate that problem also.

Another concern of our government has been to really make known to seniors what services are available to them. To better do that, an interdepartmental committee, chaired by the Department of Social Services. This committee will better co-ordinate the delivery of services to senior citizens, and assist in providing services more reflective of the needs and circumstances of senior citizens.

And to nicely complement that, a senior citizens' bureau will be established within the department. This bureau will be headed up with standing interdepartmental committee on government programs and services, document the concerns and needs of seniors for government, provide information and referral services, provide extension information and education services, consult with seniors' organizations, and administer the existing seniors' activity centre program.

I'm very pleased with those government moves. My colleagues from Saskatoon South and The Battlefords will be speaking on other aspects of this motion.

I want to begin my closing remarks by saying, at the conclusion of the seniors' forum, the Hon. Gordon Dirks addressed the delegates, sincerely thanked them for attending and their input, offered to promote good communication between government and the department, between government and the senior citizens, especially the Department of Social Services, and he offered

to bring their recommendations to his government colleagues. For this he received a standing ovation, and I think it's appropriate that I read to the Assembly some of the actual quotations from some of those delegates.

First time I have ever attended. I was very impressed, and I know it's the first time natives were invited.

Excellent. You've achieved more in two days than has been done in 10 years.

This is a first opportunity for direct contact by seniors to government on important concerns.

Very worthwhile, hoping it will continue.

Excellent, the very best way to put democracy in action.

I commend Gordon Dirks, and his staff, on a job well done.

These are just some of the comments by the delegates who attended that seniors' conference in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, based on that information, I am very pleased to move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon South:

That this Assembly commend the provincial government for the new initiatives taken on behalf of Saskatchewan's senior citizens, including the establishment of a senior citizens' bureau to co-ordinate services and information of special interest to senior citizens; and for the expansion of a Senior Citizens' Council to facilitate greater input from senior citizens on government issues of particular concern to senior citizens; and to thank all seniors from all parts of the province who attended a two-day senior citizens' forum where concerns were raised and recommendations made dealing with housing, education, transportation, and community services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MYERS: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be back in the Chambers once again and to speak on such a resolution as presented by my hon. colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Many of the members in this Chamber know that last fall the Ministers of Social Services, Health, and the minister responsible for Sask Housing appeared in Saskatoon and met with some 58 senior citizens' representatives from across Saskatchewan, and they agreed to reflect their needs — needs they've been reflecting upon the governments of Saskatchewan for quite a number of years. We did this. We did this in an informal forum. Forum delegates went to the meetings to contribute what they thought would be a pretty good road to improving services for the senior citizens on behalf of the government.

In the process of doing this they also laid the groundwork for improved communications between all seniors in the province and their government, a government I'm proud to be part of. When they were asked to evaluate the conference on a scale, here's what they said:

We all enjoyed it, because many groups were able to participate and voice their concerns. We were especially glad to see so many government personnel in which to talk with.

Also:

This is the first opportunity for direct communication between senior citizens and the ministers.

They also said:

It really gave us an opportunity to talk to the persons who we hope will deal with the interests and concerns of seniors. This is unlike the former government.

A great deal of contact between seniors and our government, as we have presented, have represented a great deal to this province.

And the list goes on. They talked on such issues as education, senior citizens being allowed to participate and return to university to take up one or two classes. They talked on transportation. The consensus was there was a need for upgrading transportation for seniors.

It was also unanimously accepted that there is a critical need for taxi service in small communities.

They talked about housing. And this one I'm particularly proud to talk about at this point, because it was in last fall's throne speech that we started addressing this problem. And through the budget, which was presented to us last night, it was addressed.

But here's what the seniors wanted then. It was the consensus of each group that a home repair program of some form was needed. It was needed, and they told us. And that's communication. Their recommendations were (and this was their recommendations to this government), that a grant of a minimum of \$1,000 be made available. And from the budget speech last night we saw exactly that – a \$1,000 grant for five years. And they also told us that day that a grant should be available on a year-round basis. They said the program should address itself to those with the greatest need. And we will see that through the social services reform which will be coming out later.

They had recommendations to the Department of Health that all groups expressed a need for level 3 and 4 nursing homes. And I see the former minister of Social Services, the member from Shaunavon, sitting over there, who was partly responsible for putting a moratorium on nursing homes – a moratorium. He says, "In Regina and Saskatoon." Well, I can tell him about the nursing homes in Saskatoon. We have built more in the last 18 months than you built in seven years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MYERS: — We are also going to be starting construction on a 238-bed unit in Saskatoon – 238 beds. You produced 192 beds in three years in the whole province. That's not a proud record. I wouldn't even mention it.

Their recommendations were there was a need for level 3 and 4 care nursing homes, and we have addressed that. We have addressed it with 1,000 new beds, \$25 million over the next five years. That's five or six times the amount you put into it. And we had to address the problem because you left a shortage for us. You tended to buy potash mines, uranium mines, rather than putting it into nursing homes. Let's look at the facts.

Since 1975 there have been an additional 20,000 senior citizens in our ranks, 20,000. It moved up from 100,000 in 1975 to the present date of 120,000 which reflects . . . The 100,000 reflected 10.7 per cent of the population at that time. The 120,000 reflects approximately 12 per cent of the population. So the need is growing, and it should have been addressed years ago. But we have addressed it now, now through communication with senior citizens' groups.

They looked at other programs, preventative program services, the need for more preventative care and preventative education to prevent institutionalization, including chiropody. The Minister of Health introduced that, our Minister of Health, a need that has been requested over the years by senior citizens afflicted by arthritis. They asked for respite care and interim care beds, and that's been addressed. That has been addressed, and those will be built under this budget at was presented last night.

They mentioned other things. They mentioned drugs. Here's what their concern on drugs was. Concern was expressed that physicians over prescribe to the elderly, and hopefully through the social services reform we will correct that problem. They express concerns over premiums, user charges, and extra billing.

Well, they shouldn't express any . . . They shouldn't have any concern now because there will not be any extra billing. We have not followed through, nor did we ever intend to, with extra billing. But as the opposition would prescribe, they still hold that out to the people and say, you wait they will. It won't happen. It won't happen. Mediscare all over. It's dead.

They also noted the role of seniors and senior organizations in health. They said that senior organizations have an important role to play in organizing and hosting, arranging for, the services provided. And we will. We have set up committees to deal with that.

They also stated a concern that volunteers have an important role to play in the care of the elderly, and we will hopefully be addressing that problem too. Another concern they had was there should be more consumer protection and consumer advice available for the seniors. Well, there will be. I know the hon. member from Maple Creek is concerned over this problem, and she will be watching it very carefully.

Also at that meeting they were there and could communicate with the ministers. And part of the dialogue was: the best way to involve seniors in decisions affecting them was to provide feedback about existing programs, to get their advice on new initiatives, to help them identify needs at the local level, and to help them become involved in solving many of their own problems. In the past the government tried to solve their problems or, I should say, created some of their problems. But we will be in constant communication with these groups trying to solve their problems, not creating new ones.

The minister from Regina Centre says he wished we had more success. Well, he must wish it because they never had the success when they were in government. They never did anything for it. The Minister of Social Services at that time said:

I am announcing to you today a four-part strategy to try to bring about this communication. The first part of the strategy is this seniors' forum which was last fall, (he said) to gain perspective at first hand.

And I was proud to be at that meeting, and I gained first hand by communication with those senior citizens. I'm proud of that. He said there would be closer relationships with seniors through effective communication, and we've maintained those lines of communication open.

The third part of the strategy: the Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, and he established a Senior Citizens' Provincial Council. And there was more; there was a lot more. And if the members are interested in reading about it, there was a paper that came out by the senior citizens last fall stating that they were extremely happy to be communicating and participating with the government on the new initiatives, and they didn't have to wait 11 years. They waited till this budget came out – this budget, which said seniors . . .

And the Minister of Finance said: it is clear that we have an increasing number of senior citizens

in this province; they deserve our support. And they do. And I would like to have the public know that I will be supporting them in any which way I can on assisting senior citizens.

The minister also said: we will provide \$6 million on an annual basis to expand the number of long-term care beds. And what did you provide? Not \$2 million.

The minister also at this point introduced the Senior Citizens' Home Repair grant. This will be \$20 million over the course of its term — \$20 million. And effective July 1, as my colleague from Riversdale mentioned, there will be an increase — an increase, not \$5, not 10, but \$25 for the single senior citizen — \$50 now. And for the married couples the increase will go from 45 to 75, an increase of \$30. And what did the NDP increase it? What did the NDP increase it? In 1978 they gave them \$5 before an election. They didn't care about senior citizens. They were caring about their results at the poll in '78. Well, they fooled them once, but they didn't fool them in '82.

Yet, it becomes apparent by the increasing number of senior citizens in this province that more attention must be paid to them, and we have been taking that initiative — initiative to communicate, to listen to, and to implement programs that they wish — good programs that they see will benefit themselves. Programs which they see will keep them in their own homes, not in institutions, in their own homes.

And my colleague, across the floor, from Shaunavon mentions telephones. Well, yes, we took the E&H tax off electrical bills — electrical bills which will be directly affecting senior citizens, as they say, who are least able to afford the increases. And I agree. They are the least able to.

And in the future, we will be addressing his concerns about telephones.

AN HON. MEMBER: — When?

MR. MYERS: — And when? He asks when. Well, it's not my position to say when. I will leave that to the minister.

But, through increasing numbers of senior citizens in this province and their needs, we have taken the initiative, and that's why, when I second this resolution no. 6, it gives me great pride.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to add a few words to this resolution. I would like to agree with my colleague from Riversdale that the seniors of this province do deserve to be commended, but I would question the word "commend the provincial government." I would think that that is a typographical error, probably should say: "condemn the provincial government" for the kind of work they have done in not providing relief for the senior citizens in this budget.

I would like to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when you look at some of the promises that were made to the senior citizens during the last election campaign, namely the free telephones for senior citizens, which was in every pamphlet throughout the province, I believe that most seniors were disappointed once again when the third budget came out, and that promise still stands and waits to be fulfilled.

I noticed that the member for Riversdale did not mention free telephones, as well she might not, because I believe that that promise . . . that there isn't an intention to fulfil it during this year, and that the year before the election there will be an attempt to promise this once again, or put some money in next year's budget two months before the election and try to trick the senior citizens, once again, into believing that the Conservatives defend the rights of senior citizens.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to go through some of the increases that seniors have seen. Neither of the members who have spoken have talked about the 18.5 per cent increase in bus fares which seniors have had to pay over the last year. None of them talked about the 17 per cent increase in nursing home rates which seniors are being forced to pay – four increases in less than two years. And as I understand it now, the Minister of Health will be making announcements every three months, increasing the rates in nursing homes once every three months, or four times a year, from now until he leaves office at the time of the next election.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would very much like to tell the government that these increases in nursing home rates are not acceptable to the senior citizens of the province. Not only are nursing home rates increasing on a four-times-a-year basis, but the number of people waiting to get into nursing homes has increased, and increased drastically, as a result of the freeze on nursing home construction which is presently in place in Saskatoon and Regina.

I would like the people of the province to know, Mr. Speaker, that not one nursing home bed has been opened in the city of Saskatoon in the last two years. Not one nursing home bed has been opened in Saskatoon or Regina in the last two years. What the minister is trying to pretend to the people of the province is that he has announced nursing home beds of 1,000 which are nowhere to be seen. What I would like to challenge the minister, Mr. Speaker, is to why he didn't announce 2,000 beds over the next five years. Why didn't you announce 5,000 beds over the next five years?

Everyone knows that the promises made by the Conservative government are nothing but that – simply promises. We have heard promises about job creation through the last budget, where they promised 20,000 jobs and we got four. We see those kinds of promises are, once again, in this year's budget. But when it comes to nursing homes, when it comes to nursing homes in the city of Regina, the number on the waiting list is presently 1,000. The Santa Maria nursing home in Regina says that a person who enters the list, or goes on the list today, will wait three years before they will be able to get into a nursing home in Regina. And in Saskatoon the problem is just as exaggerated. And I challenge the Minister of Health to get up on this issue and defend his performance in creating nursing home beds and the jobs that would go with them, as well as the need that would be fulfilled.

I would like the members, as well, to comment on the 5 per cent decrease in the home care program which was announced in yesterday's budget. I noticed that none of them got around to the point where they would talk about the budget cut which has occurred to senior citizens in the health budget, which allows for a 5 per cent decrease going to help seniors to stay in their own homes. When they talk about how much money they are going to spend on the SIP (Saskatchewan Income Plan) program, I would challenge them to add up all their cuts, and they would find that the increases are minuscule by comparison the cuts that are going on in the nursing home rate increases which are taking place. Because when you put an increase on 8,000 beds in the province, Mr. Minister, four times a year, that will far outweigh any increase that the Minister of Social Services is putting into senior citizens' programs.

On the issue of the Saskatchewan Income Plan which has been announced to change in the near future, I believe on July 1, I would challenge the Minister of Social Services to get up in this Assembly and deny the fact that the total amount, the people getting the maximum amount, is 2 per cent of the seniors in the province of Saskatchewan. His program will affect 2 per cent; 2 per cent of the seniors in the province will get an extra \$25; 2 per cent of the seniors will get the maximum amount in the SIP program. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in fact, 80 per cent of the seniors in the province will not be affected in any way by the increase in the SIP program. These are not my statistics. These are taken from the bulletin. Twenty-one thousand will be affected, and we have 120,000 seniors. We have 120,000 seniors and 20,000 will get some increase. What about the 80,000 who have had their power bills increased by 15 and 20 per cent? What have you done for them? Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Minister of Social Services to get up in this Assembly and deny the fact that 80 per cent of the seniors will not be affected by the increase in the SIP

program.

Mr. Speaker, I believe what is called on by the senior citizens to be set in place is an allowance that would help pay the utility rate increases which this government is presently putting into place on a regular basis. I say that a \$50 or a \$100 a month shelter allowance which was proposed by the NDP government would help with rent, would help with power bills and telephone bills, which have increased a great deal under the Conservative government. Anything less than that is not suitable, and trying to make political points on senior citizens by increasing their rates for 2 per cent is not going to go over with the seniors in this province. The 80 per cent of the seniors who will not be touched by this budget, in fact will be paying more and more and more, will remember what kind of a budget this Conservative government brought down.

I would like to mention again that the problem in Saskatoon in the area of nursing homes is grave indeed. The waiting list in Saskatoon, as well, is well over 1,000. The special project which the Minister of Health was talking about – some 240 beds which has been announced – should have been in place by now, should have been on the road 18 months ago, two years ago. We still have not got one yard of concrete poured for that new facility, and I would challenge the minister that we will not have one person in that nursing home before he leaves office.

I think the waiting list in other areas is as bad or worse. The problem in Moose Jaw – I was there the other day, and in the one nursing home the waiting list alone is 100. In my constituency, if I add up the number of people waiting to get into nursing homes, it's about 400. And I think the minister is whiling his time away when he's talking about how much he's doing for senior citizens, when they are waiting for nursing homes, waiting for help with their power bills. And I say this budget will do nothing to help them out.

I think this resolution as well, which attempts to applaud what has been done here, is nothing more than playing politics with cheap programs to try to get attention by the press, and by the few senior citizens who they will be helping. The 2 per cent who will be helped, I agree, with get help; but the other 98 per cent will get very little.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MORIN: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's always a pleasure to have the opportunity to stand and participate in debate in this House. It's always a particular opportunity to follow a member from the opposition, because although on this side of the House we go to a considerable length to be well prepared and do a good job, they always seem to provide us with a little more cannon-fodder. I can only say, in following the member from Shaunavon, that the temperature here went up considerably, and the senior citizens, in particular, of this province, learned a lot about hot air in the past 11 years, prior to the change in government. And we in this Chamber learned a little more about it today.

Mr. Speaker, the interest shown by this government in Saskatchewan seniors is new to them, and it's very much appreciated by them. The people who built this province, who came here with their dreams, with their hopes, and carved out the land that we see and live in today – out of a wilderness – are now at an age when they deserve to enjoy the benefits of their labour. They worked hard. They saved, prospered, and created a province in which all of us can enjoy a standard of living second to none in the world.

In the case of many of them, they left countries where they recognized there was little or no opportunity for them, and they came here with the hopes of building a freer and better society – not only for them, but for their children and their grandchildren. They did their share, and now it falls to us to thank them for their efforts. Their vision and their perseverance is what is now Saskatchewan.

For the past number of years, the senior population in Saskatchewan have been mentioned, have been encouraged, but have had very little done for them by the former administration. In fact, a fair representation of the operation of the former government would be that they talked a good game but they had trouble finding the playing field.

The former government ran their administration on policies of fear. We saw them run election after election by encouraging people to believe the worst of every political party other than their own. In particular, related to senior citizens, we heard them initiate the fear of loss of universal medicare benefits, which are a sacred trust to all the people of this province, and which the former government knew would be preserved by any new government. In spite of this, they spread the rumour that they were the only ones who could look after seniors. But, finally, in 1982, the people of Saskatchewan saw through their rhetoric and replaced them with a government who cared more for action and less for words.

What issues are important to seniors? Well, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the same issues that are important to the general population. They're concerned about the cost of living. They're concerned about the accessibility and opportunity for them to have input to government. They're concerned about their future, and their long-term well-being. And to address these concerns, what this government has done is to meet with them, to speak with them, to help address their needs, and develop a rapport which the seniors of our province have never had in the past. To help develop this rapport, the Minister of Social Services restructured the Senior Citizens' Provincial council in order to make it more representative, and a more effective advocate on behalf of seniors. The former seniors' council consisted of 11 members. The new council was expanded to include 15. The former council did not include a representation from senior citizens' Action Now, one of the largest seniors' organizations in the province. The new council now includes representatives from both the Saskatchewan Seniors' Association and Action Now.

The former council did not include representation from native seniors. Well, the new council does have native representation. The former council did not include representation from northern Saskatchewan, even though almost all the MLAs under the former administration came from that part of the province. The new council does include representation from northern Saskatchewan and, as a result, we have reached out and touched areas of this province which have formerly been ignored by the NDP administration.

The Department of Social Services, under this administration, held the first ever seniors' forum in Saskatchewan. This is the first opportunity which seniors had ever had for direct contact with the government on many concerns which were important to them. At that forum, the minister announced the establishment of a seniors' bureau in the Department of Social Services. Apparently seniors had been requesting the establishment of such a bureau for over a decade. Yet, while the other government was in power, their request continually fell on deaf ears.

Senior citizens are critically aware that there is a chronic shortage of nursing home beds in the province. Although the NDP government raved about their performance in the health care field and particularly in providing for seniors during their declining years, in the five-year period prior to their being replaced as the government of this province, they managed to build only 142 nursing home beds throughout the entire province. In less than two short years since taking office in this province, the government has built 190 nursing home beds throughout the province.

In the budget which was delivered last night, we announced a five-year program for \$25 million for 1,000 new nursing home beds. In addition, we announced the 500-bed renovation program – altogether 1,500 new beds. This indicates a commitment of roughly 12 times the number of nursing home beds above what the NDP developed in an equivalent period of time.

Addressing the issue of cost of living, last night's budget saw the Saskatchewan Income Plan

increased and, in fact, doubled. There had only been one increase in the plan since 1975, during which time the NDP were in government, and effective last night, coming into force July 1, 1984, we will be doubling the Saskatchewan Income Plan.

In addition, we have initiated a Senior Citizens' Home Repair Program, which provides to many seniors who wish to maintain their home, the opportunity to renovate and improve their surroundings which has not been present in the past. It will allow them to live in comfort and convenience in their own home.

The removal of the tax on power bills will be a benefit, not only to seniors in the province, but to every individual living here in Saskatchewan. You can rest assured that this innovation will not go unnoticed by our seniors within Saskatchewan.

In addition, the overall reduction in the amount of government spending will help avoid the inflationary syndrome which we have gotten into in this province and in Canada. Consequently, by abating inflation, the senior population of our province will again have their financial situation enhanced. Many of these people live on fixed incomes, and they are the worst ones hurt by the inflationary spiral.

Many of our seniors have tied to the agricultural field and they will be happy to see the innovations of the budget in the agricultural sector – innovations which many of them wish would have taken place when they were still on the farm.

I find, in talking to the seniors in my riding, that their prime concern is for their grandchildren and for the young people of the province. They find that they have done fairly well and survived through tough times but they have a concern for what will happen to these young people. Will they be able to live here? Will they be able to find jobs here, and take training within our province? In the past, that wasn't the case. We have addressed that issue since coming into government, and we addressed it again last night.

Well, where will their grandchildren find jobs? Where will their grandchildren find opportunities for education? In the future, they'll find them in Saskatchewan.

Last night in the budget, we addressed the seniors' concern in this area by providing 3,500 new training spaces in the next two years, and 5,600 jobs for young people immediately. In addition, the employment tax credits, the long-term fixed financing available to small business, the venture capital corporation creation – all will serve to create jobs for young people in Saskatchewan, which will mean that the grandchildren, and great grandchildren of our seniors will be able to stay at home, close to their grandparents.

Mr. Speaker, there is a great deal more to the province of Saskatchewan than just land and trees and wheat fields. It's a spirit and an attitude, and that's what this government has tried to address in its term in office and in its budget last night. We've addressed the spirit and the attitude which the pioneers came here with, and we have done things in a way which is consistent with the type of country that they wanted to develop.

In less than the two years when we've been in government, the senior population of our province has seen greater interest and stronger commitment from this government than they have ever seen from any government in the history of this province. We have addressed their concerns as they relate to the cost of living, as they relate to long-care care, as they relate to the maintenance of the family unit within this province. And they are saying today on every street in Saskatchewan that they support this government, that they are grateful to this government, and that the last thing they ever want to see again in Saskatchewan is an NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, it's with a great deal of pleasure that I speak on this motion by the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me some pleasure to join in the debate, to say on behalf of our party that we recognize that the seniors of this province have made a great contribution. And certainly during 1980, during the Celebrate Saskatchewan, in community after community our government and representatives of this Assembly helped to honour the contribution of our senior citizens.

I think one of the most commendable experiences that I've had in public life is to be able to meet with a number of the senior people, pioneers of this province. I see in them a group of people who are proud, a great feeling of wanting to be independent, that they were a group of people with a compassion, with hopes and dreams of building a better province, and certainly their contribution cannot be underestimated.

I look at this resolution, Mr. Speaker, and I am concerned by the hypocrisy of the comments that have been made. During the last campaign, one specific promise was made to the senior citizens, and that is that they would offer them free telephones. That promise has not been kept, and, in fact, what they have done is increase the cost of telephones by 19 per cent to every senior citizen.

I think that in another very disturbing way, in this province before, we had rent controls which tended to control the rent that many seniors had to pay. Under this government and their commitment to the realtors and the speculators and the marathon development companies, the rent controls have effectively been dismantled and our seniors are now at the whims of the speculators.

I want to say that not only have they destroyed rent controls which protected so many seniors in this province who are renting facilities, but also I want to say that what they have done away with that we had proposed, was a shelter allowance, which we provided to the seniors to help them to curb against the inflation of the day.

I think, as we look, the record will be clear that the New Democratic Party provided a large range of programs to the seniors of this province in respect for their contribution. I look at some of the major programs that were provided. I think of the senior citizens' activity centres where we co-ordinated with the New Horizons, the federal program, to have activity centres and bowling alleys and recreation facilities for seniors throughout this province. I think of the home repair program that we introduced and re-introduced. And what this Tory government did was to cancel it, froze it, wiped it out for two years. I think of the Saskatchewan income program which we introduced — one of the first in Canada.

I think, in respect to the nursing homes, it was the New Democratic Party that, prior to the election, implemented in the nursing homes a basic rate of \$390 for level 2, 3, and 4. I want to say that along came this government and they have had increases after increases in the charges that are made in nursing homes. I believe that they're over \$447 a month.

I want to say that in order to help our seniors get around the province to visit relatives and to do their shopping, we had special rates on the Saskatchewan Transportation buses, and certainly this was of great assistance to them. Also, we had established special tours that many of our senior citizens were allowed to take a tour of the province. The special tours now are being cancelled and privatized in the private sector.

If we take a look at the drug programs, Saskatchewan instituted one of the most forward and one of the best administered drug programs in Canada.

Also, I want to say that our government introduced the senior citizens' home care program. And today when I look at the budget, I see that there are major cuts in the funding of the home care program.

Senior citizens, I want to say, really trust our party and the New Democratic Party. One of the basic reasons why the seniors of this province indeed trust the New Democrats is because we have put in place in Saskatchewan a medical care program, the best in North America. We put into place in Saskatchewan the best medical insurance program anywhere in North America. And I want to say to you here that the Tories . . . The only reason that the Tories are not undermining the medical care insurance is that they don't dare to.

Because if you look across Canada, and what do you see in Tory Alberta? A total disruption and an unmantling of medicare on a universal commitment that medicare was introduced.

I want to say that we have universal medical care in Saskatchewan because of the New Democrats. I want to say that we have a true medicare system in Alberta because of the New Democratic government. I say that in every Tory province governed by Tory governments across this province, that medicare is being undermined.

I ask the public to look at British Columbia where you have the combination of a government of Liberals, Tories, and Social Credit, and there is the greatest erosion of medicare in Canada. I ask you to go to Tory Alberta, and I will say that there is the greatest undermining of medicare in Canada. I ask you to go to Ontario, where families are paying up to \$600 a year for the premium.

I tell you, and I say to the senior citizens of this province, that medicare is one of the greatest programs that was introduced in the health and social programs. I think that the Tories are being hypocritical when they are saying, in fact, that they are the protectors of medicare. They are not the protectors. I would even go so far to suggest, if this party opposite, and if the people were unfortunate enough to see this party re-elected, I will go so far to predict, Mr. Speaker, that there will be an undermining of medicare. They can't do it in this term, but I'll tell you the network is open, and that is the direction they're going.

And I say to the senior citizens of this province, don't be mislead by the hypocrisy and the rhetoric coming opposite. I'll say that as long as New Democrats are in this legislature, as long as New Democrats are in the government, that we will guarantee to the people of this province a comprehensive medical care program.

I want also, Mr. Deputy Premier, to indicate that what we had here in Saskatchewan was the senior citizens' council, one of the first in Canada. And I want to say that these people here are seeing how they converse with, and talk to, and co-ordinate with, the senior citizens. And I want to say that the executive director of the senior citizens' council was an individual that has the respect across Canada and North America, Mr. Harry Mullens . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, he was the executive director of the senior citizens' council. I think that he had done a tremendous job in working with the seniors.

One of the areas that I worked with him, and with other senior citizens' group – the senior citizens were divided up into some three groups at that time – and one of the tasks of the senior citizens' council was to work with the various groups of senior citizens, and to co-ordinate them into one effective representing body of senior citizens.

And I find here that the Minister of Social Services, who says that, oh, he's meeting and talking with these senior citizens, that he went out and made an announcement. And I look at a press clipping here, and he never even spoke, invited, or talked to the executive director, a man of the stature dealing with senior citizens, an expert in the field of the ageing.

Here is just a short news release which indicates what nature of consultation this man has:

Chairman caught off guard. Nobody was more surprised than Harry Mullens, head of the Senior Citizens' Provincial Council, when Social Services Minister Gordon Dirks announced Friday that the council would be totally restructured.

Now that is, I think, showing a lot of respect for an individual who had carried on and co-ordinated the affairs of the seniors in this province, I think with distinction that no one could challenge.

So what I am saying here, that I think that what is represented in this resolution is, again, the normal hypocrisy of the government opposite. We find in the budget . . . We've had three budgets since the Tory government took office, and one essential promise which they promised during the last election they have failed to fulfil.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go on and relate a considerable more time on this resolution. And so, therefore, I'm going to ask leave to adjourn the debate at this time, Mr. Speaker.

Debate adjourned.

Resolution No. 8 – Expansion of Technical Institutes

MR. WEIMAN: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is generally a pleasure to rise in the House to be able to discuss common issues that we hold together as two parties in this province. However, I find myself this afternoon rising with a feeling of dismay, and a feeling of disappointment.

This afternoon, during question period, we heard comments from the members of the opposition regarding the dire straits of our students and young people in this province. We heard comments from the member from Cumberlands talking about the lack of job training in the North, and the dire conditions that the people of the North are placed in.

And the reason I say I stand in dismay and disappointment is that there are certain goals that I think that we all hold in common from various parties – those things to do with our parents, our elderly, our young people, our children, health. And I'm surprised and dismayed that resolution No. 8, an opportunity to congratulate the government – not the PC government or the NDP government – but to congratulate the government on some of the excellent things that have transpired this part year, and are going on now, and will go on in the future. And I will explain that.

I do believe, quite frankly, that if we are hearing true concerns, and not crocodile tears and gnashing of teeth and wailing that we've heard in the past, that this resolution should have been properly put forward by the members of the opposition.

What am I discussing? I am going to point, find work . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The point I wish to come to is the fine work that has been done by the government, that you had the opportunity to do through your minister, but that was done through our Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, the hon. member for Turtleford, and that regards the expansion of technical institute capacity in this province.

If the increases throughout this province would have been on the scale of 100 or 200 or 300 seats, that, in itself, over the past record, would have been phenomenal. That, in itself, would have said to the young people of this province and to their parents: yes, we do care. We do care about your education; we do care about your technical training; and we do care about the occupation and the opportunities to get an occupation in the future.

However, we are not talking about a magnitude of just 100 or 200 or 300 seats. We are talking of a magnitude of seats that are approaching a 70 per cent increase over the next two to three years – a 70 per cent increase in the training positions in our technical institutes from southern Saskatchewan and, indeed, all the way up to northern Saskatchewan. What does that break down to in numbers? Where before there were 4,500 seats available, approximately, we are now aiming towards and working towards, and shall fulfil, a seating capacity of 7,500 training positions in this province – a 3,000 increase, 3,000 increase.

In terms of the constituents that it involves an opportunity to advance their education, in full numbers it would mean 900 additional spaces in Wascana to take care of the environs around Regina; 400 more spaces for Kelsey in Saskatoon area; 440 more spaces for that fine city of Moose Jaw and . . . (inaudible) . . . area; 600 spaces in skill extension and the northern branch. And that is not counting the brand new facility that will be coming on-stream in the city of Prince Albert – over 800 new seats available.

What brought this about? Definitely, a crying need for more spaces – quite frankly, because not enough had been done in the past. Not enough had been done in the past. The record shows it – 4,500 seats, and no great increases.

We realized that there was a higher demand for skills training capacity. We had no option after listening to the people of this province and to the parents who said: how can my child advance? He does not want to go to university; he wants to get into this trained skilled area. We said, yes, we have to increase these seats.

Also we had to look at the expansion that took into consideration the range of training available. Are we educating in this province just for vocations? And are that training just for vocations of the past – the same old vocations over, and over, and over again? Or are we looking ahead and saying, yes, we are not only going to look at training for vocations of the past, but anticipate those vocations for the future. In other words, instead of training just for vocations, to train for change. The public demands it; the students demand it; the new technologies demand it.

Just a brief outline of some of the new and additional courses that were demanded, and that will be implemented, and are being implemented right now. I have a list of 59 new and additional courses that are coming on-stream, and that does not even take into consideration the courses that will be offered in that new institute at Prince Albert – everything ranging from personal development worker, car making, support staff, accounting, machine shop, drafting, high tech, radio, TV, electrical construction, pre-tech, co-op education, computer technology, occupational health. The list, as I said, goes up to 59. I am sure that within the next two years we will increase that to past 59, so that within the next two years, the eight members opposite will have as much opportunity to apply to this new training as our young students do.

We realized quite quickly that the programs that we wished to initiate and implement had to have a wider spectrum; that that spectrum had to include not just the standard student as we know it—the young student coming out of high school, age 18 to 20 – but had to include opportunities for women, for the native population, for our senior citizens; in fact, an opportunity to go back to school. And these courses and the increase of the seating capacity, I think, reflect the desire of the population of Saskatchewan.

Also, greater emphasis had to be placed on the access to training of people who reside out of the major urban centres, so that it was not, in fact, and in perception, an institute that was only for the cities of Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and Regina.

The hon. member made reference this afternoon in question period to the lack of job training – the lack of job training in the North. Part of our program to expand includes the skills extension program, as well as the new institute in Prince Albert, which will allow those students from the northern areas to participate.

I have a list here, just for your information, of some of those programs that do allow this opportunity for northern people to participate in the opportunity to gain advanced education. Just in the area of Buffalo Narrows-La Ronge, there are courses ranging from survey aide to business education, chemical lab technician, administrative secretary, business education, including industrial mechanics, heavy equipment operator and maintenance, introduction to computers and data processing. And yet, these programs were announced in the past. The 3,000

seat capacity increase has been announced in the past. And yet, we hear a lack of applause for good programs for people that need programs in order to train themselves, to re-tool themselves, to re-skill themselves, for the job market that's waiting for them. And again, as I stand here, I hear a lack of applause for the opportunity to be able to help out an additional 3,000 students.

AN HON. MEMBER: — What happened to the great program of last summer?

MR. WEIMAN: — There is the applause we hear. We hear the applause of a barb — an applause from a barb who is a member of Regina Centre, commonly . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I am amazed and dismayed, as I said, that this resolution . . . In all fairness, if you are truly concerned with the students in this province, and truly concerned with the training that they receive to enable them for job enhancement, I'm totally dismayed that this resolution was not placed by you eight members opposite. And I think the people of the province recognize it, that when there is any kind of ill-comment or barb, it's just a political ploy. Three thousand students is not a political ploy; it's 3,000 students sitting in desks, training themselves for the future to anticipate the types of occupations, and kinds of programs that they can get involved in, in the future. And you use it as a political ploy. What does that equate to in dollars? Four years, \$120 million — \$120 million — and you have the temerity to stand, and gnash teeth, and howl, and wail, and crocodile tears. Over \$120 million. I realize that there is correct language one must use in the House, but if that doesn't border on hypocrisy, nothing else does.

Lastly, another motivating factor . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll ask him to continue for another 15 minutes though — Mr. Member from Regina.

To develop greater flexibility and responsiveness in the training system, programs have been set up to look at those new technologies that are coming down the line. And, I might add, that of those new programs, the 59 that I'd mentioned earlier, without listing each and every individual one of them, was not developed in isolation; was not developed in the minister's office; was not developed by the bureaucracy. It was developed through a consultative process of industry, business, and education involved in forecasting needs for the future; involved in getting the input from those sectors, in order to anticipate the demands and the needs of our students in the future.

One final comment, if I may. I had mentioned that over the next three years we will increase that student capacity by 3,000. But the question, I suppose, that should be asked — and I hoped it had been asked in the past, and I haven't heard it yet — is: but, what have you done today? Because we've heard this afternoon: those are only promises; that government only makes promises.

When the hon. member from Riversdale was standing up earlier, talking about senior citizens, when the hon. member from Saskatoon South was standing up, talking about senior citizens he said, "You're great on promises. You'll keep promising for two, three years. But where is the delivery?" We've already reached one-third of that goal of those 3,000 new seats — 1,000 of them; in fact, approaching 1,100 within this year. They do keep the promises. And we will continue to fulfil those promises.

Hon. member from Regina Centre: you go tell your constituents that you did not like, this year, Wascana Institute increasing their seating capacity by 277. Tell them that you were opposed to it. Tell them that it was just flimflam. Tell them that it was only crocodile tears on our part; tell them that you do not like it. Unfortunately, we don't have that situation — unfortunately for you. Fortunately for us, there is no hon. member from the opposition from the city of Saskatoon. So, when I go back to Saskatoon, you can feel sure that I will be applauding, you can be assured

that I will be applauding the 337 additional new seats – this year – in Kelsey.

The Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw . . . Hon. members are in the same situation; they cannot rely on your good will – members from your party's good will. They cannot rely on your members' honesty. They will take care of the job themselves when they get back to Moose Jaw and tell them how much appreciated – over 204 seats – increased enrolment in Moose Jaw, is.

And I would hope that the hon. member from Cumberland would go back to his people in the northern areas, and explain to them that there is a skill extensions program that allows them to take courses outside the city of Saskatoon or Regina; that they can take them in La Ronge, and they can take them in Buffalo Narrows, and that there are 273 seats available, and made available this year. And I hope that when you go back to the North, you will tell them that that is possible, and that it's there.

Regarding education for our agricultural citizenry, this year alone Wascana Institute will provide training for approximately 4,000 farmers – 4,000 farmers. Tell them that that's flimflam. Tell them that that's unkept promises. Tell them that that is non-existent programs.

You know, I do not wish to anticipate the opposition, however easy that may be at times, but I am sure that the only response and they key response that they will bring up is: sure, you promised the technical institute in Prince Albert, but if we would have been in power, that technical institute would have been in Prince Albert. If we would have been in power . . . You stole our idea; you stole our plan. Sure, you increased 1,000 seats in the technical institutes of Saskatoon, Regina, and Moose Jaw, but if we would have been in power we would have done the same, discounting our track record from the past. But we would have done the same if we were in power.

You deal in "ifs,," If we would have done this! The facts of the matter are that we delivered. We did not rely on "if." It reminds me of my uncle that used to say, "If my uncle was a woman, she'd be my aunt." That's what the "if" stories do. "If my uncle were a woman, she'd be my aunt."

You can go around telling all those "ifs" in stories all across this province, but the people are not going to believe those "if-ing" stories. They will believe what they see in front of them, the action that they see in front of them.

Therefore, it is with a great deal of pride and a great deal of eminence and a great deal of over-exertion (because I have to give praise for two instead of for one because obviously those were crocodile tears), that I take pride in moving this resolution and offering the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, offering the opportunity, holding out the opportunity for a member of the opposition to second it. But I don't think I have to wait long on that. With a great deal of pride I move the resolution, seconded by that hon. member from Moose Jaw North:

That this Assembly concurs with the Government of Saskatchewan on its commitment to expansion of technical institute facilities and programs which will provide the people of Saskatchewan with greater educational and learning opportunities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PARKER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure that I rise and participate in this motion by my colleague from Saskatoon Fairview, and I'm very pleased to speak in support of his very fine motion. I'm particularly pleased to join in because of the fact that we're very fortunate in Moose Jaw to have a facility referred to in the motion, and knowing

what that facility has done for the city of Moose Jaw, the involvement that it entails, and the employment that it offers, in addition to the obvious benefits, the benefits which we are referring to in the motion of my colleague.

Now, when the previous administration was in power, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw was used basically for one purpose. It was used as an election campaign promise and it went along with the scare tactics on the elderly as the format of the election launch in Moose Jaw. The people of Moose Jaw, the students, the chamber of commerce, the city council, were used to hearing promises of expansion, promises of new programs, promises of larger, more beautiful facilities. They would line up every year when an election was being called and hear the same rhetoric from the NDP MLA of the day.

The first year they believed that possibly this would become a reality. Maybe this government that had been in office during the 1970s really did have an interest in education, really did have some concern for the students out there, the future work-force of the province. So they listened, and they hoped, and they waited, and they watched. Nothing happened, and another election came along. The same crowd gathered, not quite as excited this time. It was the same MLA, made the same speech, promising the same facilities. Once again, nothing happened.

Finally, they saw the light, changed the government. And I was very proud, Mr. Speaker, to accompany my colleague from Moose Jaw South, and the Minister of Supply and Services, as well as the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, to participate in the official opening of a new expansion at the Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw – a new facility which provided educational facilities, new programs, new hope and new opportunities for the young people in Saskatchewan upon consideration for future employment in the province.

I think if one were to try and assess why there was no real need or rush to expand facilities under the previous administration, all one has to do is look at the basic philosophy and the difference in the philosophy of the two governments. On the one hand, the provincial government, which now holds power in the province, has a philosophy that involves co-operation between investment, government, and the people of Saskatchewan. Now the only thing basically lacking in the previous administration's philosophy was investment. With no desire to encourage outside investment into the province, there was no real need to worry about technological changes, program changes or, in fact, very many enlargements in program facilities, because everything that was being done was being done by the government. Everything was predictable.

Now we are entering into an era of excitement. There's a demand. There's a challenge out there for these facilities to respond to the market-place. And it's an exciting challenge, and it is one that they welcome, not only institutions themselves but the students that are going to those institutions.

What we have to have in Saskatchewan, and what we as a government recognize, is a educational facility that is responsive and adaptable to the needs of this province. And when you see a government that introduces a programs such as our finance minister introduced in the budget last night, programs that offer incentives for new companies to come into Saskatchewan, offers employment incentives for new companies to come in and get involved in marketing, research development, resource industry development, there are so many opportunities in this province right now.

And if we work in co-operation with the investors, guaranteeing them that we will provide a skilled, well-trained work force for them, this province is going to move in a very positive direction over the next several years.

Now this is a need that we recognize, Mr. Speaker. It was a need that the former government

didn't recognize because they had a wall built up around the province and, with no opportunity for outside investment to come in and take place, there was no real need for a facility to offer exciting new programs and facilitate that labour force that is going to be required. An iron curtain is probably a more accurate description of the border.

Mr. Speaker, in Moose Jaw we were very fortunate, as I indicated earlier, to participate in an expansion at the Saskatchewan Technical Institute. We have heard my colleague from Saskatoon Fairview indicate that, in addition, we are opening an entirely new facility in the Prince Albert area, a facility that likewise will offer opportunities – educational opportunities, skill opportunities – to people of all areas, all parts of Saskatchewan, all ridings, an opportunity to advance their education and adapt themselves with the necessary training to be able to participate in the work-force.

We, as government, recognize that we have a challenge to provide the types of jobs that are necessary to develop the vast potential that exists here, and it is in keeping with that, that we focus so much attention in terms of financial involvement and philosophical support to the technical institutes.

I was very pleased to learn that, in addition to the expansion that we recently announced and recently underwent in Moose Jaw at the technical institute, we also have another addition that's going to be coming forth very, very shortly. There will be proposals coming out and there will be another 36,000 square feet of additional space that will be called for in the city of Moose Jaw.

Now I know that the citizens of Moose Jaw, the staff at the Saskatchewan Technical Institute, the city council, the Chamber of Commerce, the students, particularly, are very, very pleased and feel very secure, knowing that they finally have a government that recognizes not only the validity and the need for institutes such as this, but are prepared to promote and build the strength of the province around those types of facilities.

I think that when we indicated that we would be responsive to the needs of the people of Saskatchewan, this is one way that we knew that we could facilitate that promise, and it's an area that we stand to be judged on, and we have responded in a very positive manner.

As you will recall, Mr. Speaker, last year the Minister of Finance indicated that we would be embarking on a four-year \$120 million expansion, increasing the seating facilities at the various technical institutes throughout the province by some 60 per cent. And I was very pleased, and I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan are very pleased, to note that, in his address last night, he indicated that the financing for the second year of that program is in this year's budget and, in fact, we were right on track with our projected four-year expansion.

It's these kinds of things, Mr. Speaker, that set aside and stand apart this government with the previous government. And I think the key word, as I look at the motion by my colleague, has to be the word "commitment," a word that you cannot find in the NDP dictionary, and a word that the people of Moose Jaw soon learned the meaning of.

Mr. Speaker, we have . . . Just as I've mentioned, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to indicate the flexibility in the types of programming that we have at the technical institute in Moose Jaw which, by the way, are open to . . . And I might add we do have students there from places like Shaunavon (surprisingly), Assiniboia.

We're hoping to have a political upgrading course that we can offer to some of the members opposite. And we're very flexible to the needs of the day, Mr. Speaker. We have just completed our new two-floor addition, Mr. Speaker including a new cafeteria and student lounge, industrial instrumentation lab, computing services, electrical construction lab, electrical technology lab, welding offices, auto body shop, business office, electrical construction.

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We have planned and will be introducing programs in the areas of co-op education, computer technology, occupational health, business, office education, public administration, data processing, industrial instrumentation, commercial cooking, electrical construction, radio, television, pre-technology.

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the strengths, as I mentioned, that we do have in the facilities that we are promoting in the province of Saskatchewan has to lie in the fact that they are flexible. When the market-place determines that there's going to be a thrust in a certain area, and we are approaching investors that come in and participate with us, invest your capital, and we will provide a skilled, trained work-force to create jobs in the province of Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan people, and at the same time we develop as a province.

Mr. Speaker, I think that when one looks at programs such as our Build-A-Home program, Mr. Speaker, which was so highly successful, when we introduce a program such as Build-A-Home program, we know that there's going to be a flurry of activity in a certain area and, in keeping with that, we know that we have to respond by having skilled labourers available, ready to respond and participate, so that the program can be a success with no lags.

When we announce a new program, such as the new water crown which will be located once again in the fine city of Moose Jaw, which we are very proud of, we will undoubtedly call upon our technical institutes to offer possibly some varied programming to make sure that we have qualified labour, qualified workers, ready to enter in and come on-stream as the project comes into place.

When we have programs that are required for institutes such as Valley View, once again we have the flexibility to our institutes such as the technical institute, Kelsey, Wascana, and we can very easily, in working in conjunction with the market-place, provide the skilled training that's necessary so that we don't have to go outside the province to look for labour to come in and do the work inside this great province of ours.

I think that's going to be the key to the future, Mr. Speaker. And I think it's one of the essential reasons why you're seeing this activity all of a sudden in the areas of the technical institutes' growth. It wasn't needed under the previous administration because the iron curtain prohibited the capital from coming into the province. There was no flexibility because there really was no progress. We had government spending and that's basically all we had in this province.

Now the excitement certainly is evident. The students out there now that are getting out of high school – that are embarking on a career and considering the possibility of going to university, or considering the possibility of going to the technical institutes – certainly have a very realistic option in choosing one of our technical institutes, because of the wide variety of programs that we are able to adapt to their needs.

We can virtually, Mr. Speaker, offer training for any type of industry, any type of work, that is necessary in the province of Saskatchewan. Now, I think that it goes without saying, the confidence that this generates in the people in Saskatchewan, particularly those who are interested in investing in the province of Saskatchewan – people that are living here now; people that are planning on coming into Saskatchewan; people that plan to take advantage of the various and numerous incentives that we are offering to get into your own business, be your own master of your own destiny. And when it comes to requirement, in terms of labour, all one has to do is approach any of the various technical institutes and that problem can be overcome.

We can respond. We have a challenge as a government to keep in touch. Part of our overall theme of keeping in touch with the people also extends and is very applicable in the field of education. I think that . . . You know, if one does not keep in touch, Mr. Speaker, as the previous administration found out, then you find out that you're not in a position to react and respond to changes in the market place, and changes in the population – changes in demands. And by

keeping in touch we are able to adapt and adjust our programming, and we're able to offer up-to-date current programming facilities for the future needs of the province of Saskatchewan.

As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, we have so many programs that are coming into place this year. The excitement that is being generated as a result of the budget speech by my colleague, the Hon. Finance Minister, last night, is certainly going to put a pressure on the province of Saskatchewan to make sure that we do check the facilities and the programs that are in place, and that we respond in a very positive manner.

Cities like Moose Jaw are going to be a beehive of activity this year. Unfortunately, everyone couldn't participate in the awarding of the new water crown, and as a result of it coming to Moose Jaw, I can just say that the citizens there are just extremely pleased. I would like, on behalf of the citizens of Moose Jaw, to thank the Government of Saskatchewan for the fine selection they made.

Here in turn, this puts a burden on us to provide the proper trained labour and the proper trained workers so that this project can come on-stream in a very efficient manner.

In summing up, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to, once again, add how pleased I am to be able to support the motion of my colleague from Saskatoon Fairview, and recognize the tremendous importance that the educational facilities in the technical area do play in the province of Saskatchewan. And I certainly concur with the motion:

That this Assembly concur with the Government of Saskatchewan on its commitment (once again, the key word being commitment) to expansion of technical institute facilities, and programs which will provide the people of Saskatchewan with greater educational and learning opportunities.

And I'm very pleased to second the motion of my hon. colleague.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MYERS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with pleasure I can rise and speak on this motion. It's a real pleasure because there's so much good news. There's so much good news out there. Last night you could feel it in the air. I don't know about you; we felt it. You were too low down behind those desks to feel anything.

But we could feel the news pertaining to the opportunities in technical institutes, the opportunities, the \$120 million that will be spent over the next four years, the 3,500 new positions in technical institutes. That's good news, darn good news, and the fact that it ties in with the expansion in Prince Albert is very good.

I heard the member from Cumberland mention that he doesn't have training spaces. Well, there's an institute going up in Prince Albert that will take care of that problem. As it's mentioned, there will be over 800.

And I want to get on to very quickly, though, is what it means to Saskatoon, what it means to Kelsey Institute in Saskatoon. In Kelsey, '84-85 budget, \$63,000 for three permanent positions – new positions, not old positions, not re-designated positions, but new positions, expanded; 30 additional seats, 30 additional seats this year, not waiting, but this year.

But the real expansion comes in prince Albert. The real expansion comes in Prince Albert. In February '82, a technical institute in Prince Albert was announced with a training capacity of 384 training places and a capital cost of \$15.4 million. But that wasn't the end. That wasn't the end of it because we expanded upon that. They'd been waiting in Prince Albert for five years for that technical institute. It didn't come. It didn't come under their government. They were great at

making promises for no fulfilment.

What we did then: in January '83, the former minister, the Hon. Gordon Currie, announced an expansion of over 60 per cent to the institute. The capacity of the institute was increased from 384 training places to 632 – 632. A further four programs with 150 more positions are being considered right now and probably will be gone ahead with.

The first programs will begin in the fall of 1985 in leased government-owned facilities. The building designed by the Prince Albert consortium, Moore-Taylor, will accommodate all programs and will be ready for occupancy by 1986 – 1986, not 1990 – 1986. Emphasis in programming will be placed on resources – resources, that's a northern concern; mining, that's a northern concern; and forestry, that's also a northern concern; and training for small businesses to function in the small northern communities.

Tenders for the building will be let by April 5 of this year, and construction will begin in July of this year. So our initiatives on technical institutes is a large commitment, approximately \$26 million.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Outstanding!

MR. MYERS: — An outstanding amount, my colleague says. So it's with pleasure that I support this resolution which encourages opportunity for youth to learn to stay within this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all mention that following my comments, I want to move an amendment to the resolution which will in effect expand the basic resolution without eluding from the content of it, but to the extent that this Assembly regrets that the provincial government has ignored the severe financial and enrolment pressures of the Saskatchewan universities and urges the government to take immediate steps to alleviate those pressures. That will be in the nature of the amendment that I wish to present at the conclusion of my remarks.

I think all of us here can agree that one of the things that any organized society must do, and that is to give an opportunity to our young people, and I want to look at how a society, and how our young graduates, and what they are looking for.

Those that I talk to indicate to me that when they graduate from high school, or whether they merely don't complete the full high school, that they all are looking for, of course, security of a decent job in order that they can make their contribution.

I think that there are many components to providing those aspects which will, in fact, be of a benefit to our young people to enter our society. The components, I think, are that a number of options. I think that our young people should have the full opportunity, if they have the ability and the desire and the ambition, to be given the opportunity to go to university. I think, also, that every effort should be made by any government to provide technical schools for those who seek that type of training.

And I think that the third ingredient, Mr. Speaker, is that young people in this province should have an opportunity of a job. Today, I think we are debating a resolution which does not look at all of the components which are necessary for young people. And I say that the resolution is too restricted, because it doesn't include those components. And the reason it doesn't address all of the areas of this government's attempt to help young people is that there have been dismal failures.

If one looks at the university situation, where many young people are today crowding into, lining up for courses, and, regrettably, Mr. Speaker, regrettably we have to advise the young people of this province that in respect to operating grants for universities, they have been indeed cut back to 4.3 per cent.

I want to say that in respect to capital costs at universities, they have been decreased from the previous year. And so we see the situation of a tremendous deterioration of one of the very basic educational institutions which young people wish to go to.

The other thing that bothers me is that in respect to student aid, many of our students today – although the total funds that are being provided by the government has increased substantially, and I acknowledge that – but what has happened is that the criteria has been changed and that students now are expected to take out the first . . . must take out a loan of \$2,190 in loans before qualifying for any bursary and, as a consequence, what we find is that students who wish to want to go to technical schools, or to universities, who need student loans, are in fact becoming further and further encumbered with a mount of student loans.

So I think that there are . . . Certainly the third aspect that I wanted to speak on and that is, one must ask, what future do our young people have? Two years now and we have seen a government which said – and they promised a new era and a new promises to our young people – new horizons would be opened. But, unfortunately, I find that one group in our society which has suffered most is the young people – 15.7 per cent of our young people are unemployed in this province.

I indicated that in 1983, February of 1983, 95,000 young people were employed. In February of 1984 there are 3,000 less, or fewer. So what I am saying is, while the government is launching on a expansion of technical spaces. Or seats, as they refer to them (and for that I commend them), I want to say that they didn't invent institutes. We had a remarkable quality of institutes throughout the province. I think it's only fair to indicate that the expansion of space of technical institutes had been announced in the March 18 budget by the New Democratic government. And indeed what we had said there: we'll undertake a further major expansion of STI at a cost of over five million, this expansion to provide 250 new training spaces; and, second, we will construct a new training facility at La Ronge. We will build a new technical training institute at Prince Albert at a total cost of \$15 million. Together, these new facilities will create more than 750 training spaces.

So obviously, the previous government had been addressing the situation and, as I indicate, I concur and I congratulate the government for expanding the number of spaces. But I think that they have failed to meet all of the components which are so necessary for our young people to develop properly within our society. They have neglected the universities and neglected the funding, and I predict that more and more burden is going to be placed upon young people in the way of large tuition fee increases. I think that there's going to be cut-back of accessibility of students because of lack of funding, and I know that the quality of education – because I talked with the faculty association and the university, and they indicated clearly that there's no possibility of continuing with such meagre funding to keep up the quality at the universities.

So what I want to do then, Mr. Speaker, is indeed to expand the resolution, and so what I'd like to move at this time is the following resolution, seconded by my colleague, the member from Shaunavon:

That this resolution be amended by adding the following words after “opportunities” in the last line:

but this Assembly regrets that the provincial government has ignored the severe financial enrolment pressures at Saskatchewan universities and urges the

government take immediate steps to alleviate those pressures.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to take a couple of minutes to second this motion before I adjourn the debate, or ask leave to adjourn the debate, because I do want to talk to some university students and representatives of the student union who were present at the budget last night, whose first opinion of the university funding was anything but impressive. I think that they thought at first glance that the 5 per cent increase in funding for universities was going to mean that tuition fees would have to rise at a very, a very steep rate in order to make the universities viable.

Mr. Speaker, I think the time has come in Saskatchewan, with the economy, the farm economy, in tough shape — where many young people who come from farm families being turned away from university because they can't afford the tuition fee. I believe the time has come when the government should take the initiative to look at having free tuition fee for the university students and for the technical schools in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I don't believe this is a new or a terribly innovative idea. I think it's something that other areas of North America and places like Sweden and Iceland and states like California have moved to with a great deal of success. I believe having a free tuition fee for residents of Saskatchewan — young people who find themselves in a very tight spot right now because of the lack of employment and the lack of income for their parents in many cases, are being turned away.

And the theory of this government of high technology is merely a dream if they are serious about competing with places like the Silicon Valley in California, or even in Toronto and other places in Canada. Because if they're cutting back in university funding, where you have to line up to get on a computer, where you have to wait all night to get a computer space, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the theory of this government that we are going to compete for high technology is just a myth and just more words.

I think the theme in this budget that we are moving into an era of high technology, when in fact we are moving backwards at an ever-increasing rate in terms of funding of universities, makes it unbelievable that this government and this Premier is serious about high technology in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would challenge the Minister of Advanced Education to go on campus and talk more often with the students. I was there a few weeks ago with the minister and I know that the minister got a rough reception, but I think that if he were to go back there and listen to what the students are saying and listen to what the parents are saying about universities, they may have a better impression of what is needed in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, because I have a good number of other things to say on this motion I would ask leave of the Assembly to adjourn the debate so we can carry on at another date.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:53 p.m.