

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

March 28, 1984

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

HON. MR. SWAN: — Today I have a group of guests from my home community that I would like to introduce to the House. We have Trudy Treslan, who is the gold medal winner in figure skating for the women's novice competition. It was held here in Regina. That was a win that dealt with the Canadian championship, and I'd like her to stand and be recognized. Trudy, please.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. SWAN: — She's accompanied today by her parents, Roger and Dianne Treslan, and her brother and sister, Todd and Taryn. As well, in the gallery we have three of her grandparents. We have Velma Treslan, and Hugh and Margaret Hunter. Would they stand as well, please?

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. SWAN: — There will be more of a formal greeting to you, Trudy, after the question period is completed.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce to you, and through you to the legislature, 40 grade 8 students from Thomson School, some of whom would live in my riding, Regina Centre; some would live in the riding of my colleague, the member from Regina Victoria. There are 40 in number, Mr. Speaker. I am told that, for many of these students, English is a second language. I say to the students that it may appear that members on the floor have English as a second language. That's not the case.

We want to welcome you here. We hope your stay here is educational. We look forward to meeting with you later outside.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RYBCHUK: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to welcome the 40 students from Thomson School that is located in my constituency of Regina Victoria. I am told, also, that they are Asian and from eastern European background. They are accompanied, of course, by the teacher/chaperones, (I don't know if it was mentioned) Royce Barlow, John Moore, and Estelle Anthony. And I would look forward to meeting them after question period for pictures and refreshments, and I would ask all to welcome here.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a unique group of young people sitting in the Speaker's gallery today, Mr. Speaker, that have watched a carload or a train load of iron grow into the largest dragline in the world. These young people, you can guess, are from Coronach, Saskatchewan. They are Royal Canadian Air Cadets No. 556 down at Coronach. They're accompanied by their captain, Terry Stott, Harvey Kessler, Marg Palfy, Ron Farrant, and Judy Greenwood. Would you please stand and be welcomed here.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GLAUSER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure and I would ask, through you, and to this Assembly, to welcome 56 students from the Lawson Heights School, and they are accompanied by Miss Schultz and Mr. L. Baetard. I hope you have an enjoyable stay, and I'm sure all those grade 7 students will be looking forward to entering those two new high schools that are going into, and will be opening soon in the Lawson Heights area. I will be meeting with you at 3:05 in room 255 following the proceedings in this House, and I will have pictures; we will have refreshments, and I hope you will enjoy the rest of your stay in Regina. Thank you.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Legislative Assembly, a unique group of visitors from remote northern Saskatchewan. They come from a community called Sandy Bay. It's remote and isolated, and I'll name them and introduce them, and, as I do, would you please rise: Stan Marasty, Alfred Stewart, Louie Bear, Melvin Natawyes, Matthew Natawyes, Angus Bear. They are a group of people that represent a broad range of community organizations: the town council of Sandy Bay, the fishermen's association, the Northern Trappers Association, as well as the community colleges and the local school board. They're here to meet with various number of prominent cabinet ministers, dealing with socio-economic issues and problems, and I'd like to ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming them.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Income for Unemployed Single People

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, my question will be directed to the Minister of Social Services. It is obvious from your announcement today that single people who find themselves unemployed during this time of recession in Saskatchewan will be called on to live on \$11.50 a day — \$11.50 a day to find shelter, food, and clothing, and I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you can explain to the Assembly, and to the people of Saskatchewan, if you are really serious about asking people in a time of record inflation, or highest inflation in Canada and Saskatchewan, how they are expected to live on 42 per cent less than they were last year at this time.

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, this particular Minister of Social Services has made welfare reform my priority for some time now. This particular government has made welfare reform a priority for some time. The Progressive Conservative Party has made welfare reform a priority for some time, and, Mr. Speaker, I believe the people of Saskatchewan want welfare reform to be a priority of this government as well. And for that reason, Mr. Speaker, we, in fact, are going to be revamping our welfare system so that it will be more productive, more equitable, and more efficient. There will be some reduction for single employables, as I indicated previously. There will be many productive opportunities that will be available to people on welfare. Those productive activities will be on a magnitude heretofore unknown in the province of Saskatchewan. That, I believe, is welfare reform. That is the reform people want in the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a supplement to the minister. As he will well know, when he came to office 45,000 people were on welfare in the province of Saskatchewan. Today that number has risen to 62,000 and, in large part, because of the failing policy of the open for

business philosophy of this government, bankruptcies are at record levels, and many people are being put out of work . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. The member knows that when you rise on a supplementary you are not allowed to make comments but, rather, get directly to the supplementary, and I would ask you to do that.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: rather than punishing these people once more, who cannot find work as a result of your failing economic policy, wouldn't it make more sense to offer the now over 40,000 people who find themselves unemployed as a result of your policy, to find them meaningful work, rather than punishing them again by cutting their assistance by 42 per cent?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, I indicated that the primary plank in our welfare reform program will be to provide productive opportunities to people who are on welfare here in the province of Saskatchewan. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the approach of the former government to welfare was a very simple approach — perhaps simplistic would be more appropriate. They did what governments for years did, and that was to simply hand out a welfare cheque, and to say: that's enough; we've fulfilled our obligation.

We don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is enough. There are many people on welfare who are locked into the welfare syndrome because they lack the basic skills and education and training necessary to make them job competitive. What we are going to be doing, Mr. Speaker, is providing thousands of opportunities for these people — job opportunities, training opportunities — so that, in fact, they can become the productive citizens that they want to become, and that the taxpayers want them to become.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister. As he will know, if he will be honest with himself and with the people of the province, that the 17,000 people you are punishing today are people, the new welfare recipients, who have come onto the roll since you took office, Mr. Minister. These 17,000 people, the increase from 45,000 to 62,000, are people who were working under the previous government.

And I would ask you to answer the question, if it wouldn't make more sense to find meaningful employment, not work for welfare, but meaningful employment for these people, rather than to punish them for the second time? Not only bad enough not to have a job, but now take away almost half of their income that they needed to take care of themselves and, if they have, a dependant.

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, it usually is prudent for people to hold their remarks until they are familiar with the entire situation that is being talked about. And the former minister over there, in fact, is saying lots of things which have no basis in fact whatsoever. He does not know the entire context of the welfare reform package which, in fact, is an 11-point program, which I will be delineating to the House very shortly this afternoon, and I think that he will be very impressed, as indeed will be the people of Saskatchewan, with the positive, middle-of-the-road, creative approach to welfare reform that this government will be delivering, a program that has not been seen in Canada previously.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, my final question to the minister is this, and it comes from one of the planks of his program, better known as work for welfare: will you give a guarantee to this Assembly that when a person who finds himself on welfare and forced to go to work for an employer, that you will guarantee that that employer will not be allowed to dismiss one of the

existing positions in order to allow for a person to come in and work for welfare?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, I will be delineating the various elements of this particular program shortly. We're not talking about a work-fare program at all. We're talking about providing productive opportunities to people based on their interests, their needs, their background, their capability, on the basis of intensive counselling that professional social workers go through with these particular clients, to help them into the best productive opportunity that can be made possible for those people. That's the appropriate approach to take, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you. It's a question to the Premier. The real reason, Mr. Premier, for these welfare cuts are this government's extravagance in a number of areas. And emblematic of the extravagance is your bloated cabinet and the international jaunts on which your cabinet has gone. I know the rules won't permit me to list them all, but let me just remind you of a few of the international jaunts.

You, sir, have been to Hong Kong, Singapore, Peking, Changchun, Austria, East Germany, Brazil, London, New York, Chicago, Columbus, Denver, and Boston.

Your Deputy Premier has been no less energetic. He has been to Bulgaria, West Germany, Greece, Austria, London, New York. He's rested now, because he's apparently leaving on March 30 for yet another international jaunt.

Do you not think, Mr. Premier, that you might have set a better example by exercising some restraint on your own cabinet, rather than exercising the restraint at the expense of those least able to afford it?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member forgot Harvard. I was there two weeks ago in a debate about provinces becoming involved in international trade. One of the things that we found out is that Saskatchewan is very, very much behind other provinces in terms of opening offices up internationally.

This province, Mr. Speaker, exports more per capita than any other place in Canada. We make our living on the export market. The hon. member knows that, coming from an agricultural background. In grain, in livestock, in energy, in potash, in coal, in timber — all those things are exported. If we are not working internationally to provide markets and to build markets, we lose. The province of Alberta sets up a new office in New York. Last week, Ontario opened a brand new office in Boston. Ontario has an office in Boston. This province, under the former administration, wasn't even represented in many places of the world. I am delighted that we have said, "Now is the time to get out into the world, to find the markets, make sure that we're competitive, put together some contracts."

I think, if we look at the trade, the trade just in potash, Mr. Speaker, we're setting world records, all-time records, because of the things that we've been doing. And I would suggest some of the things — the transportation and the visits to places like Brazil, to Japan, to China — have paid off in spades. Hundreds of millions of dollars worth of contracts. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm quite proud of the fact that we're putting Saskatchewan on the map throughout the world because it's overdue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Those comments might have more credibility if it were not for the fact that these international jaunts are a positive epidemic among your cabinet. I'd remind the Premier that your then minister of telephones, who had no function at all, much less for international trade, found an excuse to go to Atlanta, Georgia. The Minister

of Rural Development managed to go to Scotland, a country which does not have rural municipalities as we do. I would remind you that the Minister of Health found an excuse to go to Palm Springs, presumably for his own health, rather than for the health of the Saskatchewan citizens. Can you tell us what the province got out of those visits, and will you not admit that those visits might better have been cancelled, in light of an attempt to try and set some sort of a standard?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Health was invited to address the World Medical Association because of the reputation that . . .

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I believe it's the first time . . . The Leader of the Opposition may have been invited, but I can say that I was invited to Vienna to address the World Potash Association annual meeting. I don't know if that's been the case before. But surely the movements of the ministers, whether it's local, national, or international, are to make sure that Saskatchewan's position is well understood — also to find out what other people are doing, so that this province can be first, can be aware of all the things that are taking place internationally with respect to health, with respect to trade, with respect to finance, or whatever it may be, as well as market development.

So, Mr. Speaker, this province, and the people of this province, want to make sure that Saskatchewan is first class and world class, and you can't do that by staying in Regina.

Contracting of Study to Associated Health Planners

MR. THOMPSON: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health, and, by way of information, Mr. Speaker, my question deals with a memo sent March 6 by the deputy minister of health to all branch heads in the department with respect to something called the productivity improvement program. In the memo, Mr. Speaker, the deputy minister identifies a corporation doing the outside study as Associated Health Planners, which is a Manitoba company, one of whose principals is Bud Sherman, the conservative deputy leader in Manitoba.

My questions are fairly straightforward, Mr. Speaker. When was the contract signed between the government and Bud Sherman's Manitoba company to do this work? Number two, was the work tendered? Number three, what is the value of the contract?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, in regard to the members' question about productivity, I want to indicate to this House, and to the people on the other side who probably never understood the word productivity, to the people of Saskatchewan, that one of the thrusts of this government in the civil service, in the hospitals, and in the people that are funded by this government, is productivity. And I think it's a long time coming, and it is well received.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, as the minister in charge of one of the largest departments in this government, that the acceptance of the productivity thrust in my department, as I'm sure in others, has been welcomed by civil servants. At last they're given their head to get about doing the job that they're hired to do. And they appreciate that kind of . . . That's the fresh air in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Now in regard to productivity, certainly we have individuals looking productivity. I have a person in my department, and one of the thrusts of productivity in the Department of Health, Mr. Speaker, is just simply this: and that is that the employees of the

Department of Health all through this government are to deal with the consumers of our services – the people out there in Saskatchewan – for which this government, the Department of Health, and every other department, is established to serve, a fact that they long since forgot, and one of the reasons for being dismissed from office. In regard to associate health planners who are hired to look at some of the productivity, that's correct. Mr. Sherman is a member of that association, as are four or five other people. They have a very good track reputation. Let me indicate to the member . . . I think he realizes, being an experienced member of this House, that he can't expect me to say the amount of the contract and the date of the contract. I will provide that for you, Mr. Member, at the next sitting of this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMPSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. You indicate that you cannot give the amount of the contract. You did not answer the question whether it was tendered, and you wouldn't give the value. My final supplementary then, to you, Mr. Minister, is: could the government not find anyone qualified within Saskatchewan to do this type of a study?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Hon. member, I told you, to me the cost of the study and the value, I suppose that's very similar types of words. And I know you can't expect me to answer here because I – on the cost – I sign many contracts in a department the magnitude of the Department of Health, which is a third of the budget of the province of Saskatchewan. I think it's facetious for you to ask me to remember the exact date or the amount of the contract. I give you my assurance that I will give you the figures and the answers to the question that you have asked. And I might want to indicate to you, you may be in for a bit of a surprise.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health. The question is simple: was the contract tendered?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I indicated to the member that I would give the amount of the contract, I'd give the date of the contract, I will give whether the contract was tendered or not. I told you I'd give you that at the next sitting of the House. That is my answer to you.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary. What caused the minister to give this contract to a Tory MLA from Manitoba, rather than a Saskatchewan firm knowing something about productivity?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I think if the member will wait and get the answer that I said I would provide tomorrow, I indicated you may find out that the firm is registered here in Saskatchewan – is a Saskatchewan firm also.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Another short supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are you telling the House that you don't know whether this contract was tendered or not?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I am telling you that I will give you a reasonable answer tomorrow, and I think that's only fair and square. To ask the amount of a contract in a department that signs a number of contracts, I don't think it's reasonable to ask that. I will give you this information tomorrow, if your friend beside you will be quiet and listen. Number one, I will give you all the information that you have asked for in your question right now. Okay?

Sale of Used Government Equipment

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question has to do with the fact that the fire sale of

productive equipment in Saskatchewan is mushrooming at a breath-taking rate. We have seen \$38 million worth of potash equipment sold, a \$45 million dragline at Estevan sold, \$40 million worth of highway equipment about to be auctioned, and the list goes on.

But today my question is: why was the brand new drag-line at Coronach sold, and the leasing of SPC's coal properties at Coronach? Some of the people working at SPC Coronach mine were moved from Estevan less than one year ago when SPC closed down the Souris Valley mine, and the personal assurance from the Premier that they would be guaranteed a number of jobs for years. With the latest fire sale of SPC's assets, what guarantee do you give these workers at Coronach that their jobs, number one, will remain, and that they will enjoy the same basic benefits that they get from working with SPC?

MR. SPEAKER: — State the minister that you were speaking to.

MR. ENGEL: — I can repeat it. My question is to the Minister of Labour in charge of Sask Power.

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, we have offered tendering to various companies that want to possibly mine coal in the Coronach area. Those tenders are in. We've got tenders from six different companies — private sector group. And we are busy evaluating those bids.

However, the dragline, the new dragline is ready to go into operation. And we are just protecting ourselves, for the time being, until we realize or know what the result will be of the tendering. And if it is to go to a private sector group, then they will be buying the dragline as well, as part of the whole deal.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I have in my hand an order in council no. 416/84, dated the 21st of March, 1984, signed by that minister and the Premier. And it says here:

The corporation (I won't read all the fine print there, but . . .) will sell a 2570 W dragline, known as lot 38, located at Coronach, Saskatchewan, to Poplar River Coal Mining Partnership, for the sum of \$54,347,783.

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, the drag-line is sold to a subsidiary company which is wholly owned by Saskatchewan Power, and it is registered in the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Is the partnership, Poplar River coal Mining partnership — you say it's a subsidiary of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation — is it registered under any law of the province of Saskatchewan, or does it exist only in the minister's head?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the total company is, in my understanding, registered in the province of Saskatchewan, are covering all legal aspects of registering any company in the province.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. With the sale of the drag-line, which is authorized by this order in council, does the status of any of the employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation change. Thus, are the people operating that dragline (and I assume it's still operating), employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, or now

employees of this Poplar River Coal Mining partnership, which the minister allege exists in some legal state?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, not one employee is affected by the partnership and the company that was formed. None of it will happen until the decision is made as to whether the mine will go to private contractors. And that bid and tenders are being evaluated at the present time.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, further supplementary. I note that under the same order in council, there is a substantial subleasing of coal-mineral leases held by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. For what purpose were coal interests leased to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation subleased to any other agency? What purpose is served by this particular legal manoeuvre?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, we are just covering the sale of the dragline . . . The dragline has to start working today. We may be selling the dragline to a company that wins the bid if we're going to mine the coal privately. If that happens, this whole partnership will disappear. We are just protecting the fact that this dragline may get sold to the other company once the bids are evaluated.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, either the name is misleading or your questions in this House have been misleading, because it refers to a partnership which, the name of which, would suggest is not wholly owned by any single entity. I ask you, Mr. Minister, if it is wholly owned by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, why you chose the name, and what is the purpose of going through a subsidiary to sell property owned by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, we have formed a legal partnership of a company wholly owned by Saskatchewan Power Corporation — the dragline that's to commence working. We don't know today whether the mining will be done by Saskatchewan Power or a private sector contractor that may win the bid, and it will be some weeks before we know that. So, to keep our corporation with a maximum amount of flexibility in future financing, this has been a move that we considered to take to protect ourselves in the event that the mines don't go to the private contractor.

CONDOLENCES

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, before Orders of the Day, I would rise to speak in the Assembly with regards to the passing yesterday of Chief Justice, Bora Laskin, former chief justice, Supreme Court of Canada. It think it's worthy that this House be on record recognizing and acknowledging the contribution to this country by the former chief justice.

Former chief justice was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1970. He was elevated to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada in 1973.

Many, I suppose, commentaries have been made on Mr. Justice Bora Laskin. I suppose if you try to capsulize that, the one that comes through the most is the innovativeness of the man; a man perhaps seen by many as ahead of his time on the bench.

The greatest contribution, I suppose, that this country will recognize, and historians will recognize, with regard to Mr. Justice Bora Laskin is his involvement in the constitutional debates of the early 1980s, and his interpretation of the constitution, as we all recall that long march down to the ultimate repatriation of our constitution in Canada.

I think it's worthy of this Assembly to take some time to recognize that contribution, and I would

certainly, on behalf of the government side of the Assembly, extend our sympathies to the family, but more importantly, I think, recognize that contribution in verbal form in this Assembly. Thank you.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my word to those expressed by the Minister of Finance, in tribute to the contribution made to the public life of Canada by the Right Hon. Bora Laskin, the recently deceased Chief Justice of Canada.

By any standards, Bora Laskin was an outstanding Canadian jurist. Before taking his position on the bench, he was at the very pinnacle of the law-teaching profession in Canada, and was recognized as one of the very, very few outstanding instructors in legal matters in Canada. He then moved from his position as a leader in the legal instruction field, to the Court of Appeal of Ontario, then to the Supreme Court of Canada, and then to the position of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, something over 10 years ago.

And he brought a broad new approach to the role of the judge in Canada. There are some others who have done the same, but Bora Laskin was a leader in the new and broader approach of the role of a judge. He saw the court as part of the way in which citizens shape their community and their future. He departed more often from the strict letter of the law – the black letter law, as lawyers sometimes called it – to consider the broad social consequences of the law.

And when he first went on the bench, both in Ontario, and later to the Supreme Court of Canada, he found himself among a minority of judges – a small minority of judges who took that position – and he gained the reputation of being a dissenting judge. Some called him the great dissenter, I suppose in emulation of Oliver Wendell Holmes, who attracted the same description when he sat on the Supreme Court of the United States.

But gradually Bora Laskin's views got more support, and he more often found himself writing majority judgements than was previously the case. He was a champion of civil rights, determined to give the law a human face. It's a tragedy, really, that he wasn't spared to give his wisdom to the first round of legal cases that are coming out of the new constitution of Canada. We would have benefited from what he had to say about how the charter of rights and other provisions of that constitution should be interpreted so as to give a full measure of protection to Canadian citizens. Not all of us, perhaps, would have agreed with all his judicial approaches, and we did not.

Everybody that I knew honoured Bora Laskin as an outstanding jurist with an outstanding mind, and with a dedicated commitment to the law. But he was not spared. That was not to be, and Canada has lost a truly distinguished jurist, a great Canadian, and a compassionate man. I and my colleagues extend our sympathy to his family, to his colleagues, and to many others in the legal profession who knew him, and were very fond of Bora Laskin.

Tribute to Trudy Treslan

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I want to make a motion. But just prior to making the motion, I want to say how proud we are in Saskatchewan of Trudy Treslan. She sparked something in all of us when she showed that she was a superb, and is a superb athlete, went on to win the Canadian championship, and captured the hearts and the minds and the imagination of, not only young people in Saskatchewan, but indeed, people of all ages.

It was that kind of courage and tenacity and family support that I would like to think that all Saskatchewan people are proud of, and I want to say that I am very proud of them. I know my family felt good just watching their family, and I want to encourage her and encourage all young people in the province of Saskatchewan to keep up the good work and to show that they can, indeed, be not only first class, but, indeed, world class in all their endeavours.

So I would like to move, and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition:

That by leave of this Assembly, that we, the members of the Legislative Assembly, in session assembled, extend our warmest congratulations to Trudy Treslan on her magnificent achievement in winning the gold medal in the novice women's competition in the 1984 Canadian Figure Skating Championship.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I, too, am proud to join with the Premier, on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House, in extending our sincere congratulations and our welcome to Trudy Treslan, the novice women's figure skating champion of all Canada, and Saskatchewan's first (very first) ever, national figure skating gold medallist. And so we're very proud that Trudy and her family would have come to visit with us today.

We join with her family, her parents, Mr. And Mrs. Roger Treslan, and her many friends, indeed all of Saskatchewan, in paying a special recognition to Trudy's great achievement. It was, I think, particularly thrilling that all this happened in Regina, and that many, many people from Regina and from Saskatchewan, therefore, had the opportunity to see her gold medal performance last January. All were impressed with her talent and her grace and her poise — particularly, I think, her poise for still a young girl. And we were delighted with her success.

This year a number of Canadian figure skaters have given us many exciting moments — Brian Orser winning the Olympic silver medal, and now Underhill and Martini winning the world championship last week. but we, in Saskatchewan, now have a champion of our own in Trudy Treslan. We want to wish her good luck, continued success, and we look forward possibly to the day when she might carry the banner of Canada at some future Olympics.

So, we're very pleased that you're here. We want to say how much we thank the family, because we know that while it involves a great day of work on Trudy's part, it's also an arduous career (I think I might say), for the parents who are involved, not only with the hours of training, but with the miles of travelling. They've all made great sacrifices.

And so, to Trudy and her parents, and to each member of her family, we say thank you. Congratulations! You've made us proud, and all the best in the future.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. FOLK: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister of Culture and Recreation, I would like to join with yourself, the Premier, and Leader of the Opposition, in welcoming our guests here today, and especially to congratulate Trudy Treslan on winning the gold medal in the novice women's competition in the Canadian figure skating competition. Certainly figure skating has received a large profile lately in the world of sports, with the Canadian championships, with the world championships and the Olympics. And certainly it is great to see a gold medal hung around the neck of a Saskatchewan athlete.

I will join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in wishing Trudy all the best in her future endeavours, and perhaps one day seeing another Canadian championship and, indeed, performing at a world championship or an Olympic championship. Trudy, congratulations!

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, by leave of the Assembly:

That the resolution just passed, together with the transcripts of the debate (I don't think there was much debate) be communicated to Trudy Treslan on behalf of this Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

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

That this Assembly do now recess to greet our distinguished guests and reconvene at the call of the Chair.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly recessed at 2:47 p.m.

The Assembly reconvened at 2:55 p.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Andrew that the Assembly resolve itself into the committee of finance and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Blakeney.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure for me to rise and to participate in this very important budget speech debate, and I think it's only appropriate to take the opportunity at the outset to commend the Minister of Finance for delivering a very exciting and scintillating budget speech here some days ago, and for placing before this Assembly a budget designed to instil confidence in the future of Saskatchewan — a budget which clearly places this province at the forefront of economic initiatives and progressive social thinking. Mr. Speaker, a careful analysis of this budget shows that in every way it is a document in keeping with the priorities of the people of Saskatchewan. And what are those priorities, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Those priorities are the same priorities articulated by members of this party and this government when they sat in opposition. They are the same priorities that were trumpeted by Premier Devine during the 1982 election campaign, and they are the same priorities that were overwhelmingly ratified by the people of this province on April 26, 1982. They are the same priorities today as they were two days ago. And they will be the same priorities, Mr. Speaker, of this party and this government in the future. And they are as follows: lower taxes, less government, new ideas, new opportunities, a new Saskatchewan.

That, Mr. Speaker, is what the people got on April 26, 1982, and that's what the people of Saskatchewan got on Tuesday, March 21, 1984 — a new Saskatchewan.

The days of big bureaucracy, of high taxes, of fossilized ideas, are gone. The winds of change are still blowing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and gone with the wind are the outdated socialist politicians and policies whose ideas strangled this province, stifled initiative and development, and stole the birthright of the young people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago the members of the former government, the members opposite, suffered perhaps the most humiliating defeat of any government ever to hold power in western Canada. It was likely an unparalleled political defeat. Mr. Speaker, when I listen to their vacuous comments and to their irrational criticisms of this budget, I can only conclude that were an election called today, that the NDP party would be devastated even further. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? Why are we debating a Progressive Conservative budget these days, and not an NDP budget? We need look no further for an answer, Mr. Speaker, than to the cutting analysis of NDP policies penned by one of their very own economic advisers, one Mr. James Laxer.

I would like to recount for this Assembly, and for the single member opposite, what Mr. Laxer had to say about his own party. I think it is rather informative. "NDP policy is seriously inadequate, contradictory, short-sighted, and ideologically ambivalent." In plain language, it's cock-eyed.

"NDP policy suffers from crude electoral consideration." We all know about that, Mr. Speaker. The NDP worries about offending unions, and we know how tied in the present NDP party here in Saskatchewan is to the union leadership who they do not want to offend. Perhaps most damaging of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, NDP analysis of economic and social evolution remains locked in the 1950s and '60s. Two decades out of step with reality.

The NDP is biased towards eastern Canada, Mr. Laxer says, and I'm sure that goes down well with the people in Saskatchewan. The NDP economic program is a hodgepodge of contradictions and dead-end solutions.

Mr. Speaker, I don't rarely agree with someone in the NDP party, but I feel compelled to agree with one Mr. Laxer. The NDP, indeed, is "a dead-end party." Mr. Speaker, the NDP is outmoded, outdated, out of touch, and out of power. The NDP are fast becoming an anachronism.

I just happened to come across a clip from a British Columbia newspaper which quotes an NDP MLA from British Columbia who certainly was very up-front about his party when he said the following: "The B.C. New Democratic Party is on the verge of being irrelevant." I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the NDP party in Saskatchewan has gone beyond being on the verge of being irrelevant. They are irrelevant.

Mr. Speaker, those who do not learn from history, those who do not learn from history are fated to repeat it. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite have not learned from history. Their criticism of this budget reveals that they remain firmly out of touch with the sympathies of people in every corner of this province. And, Mr. Speaker, this budget is receiving accolades from every corner, from every constituency in the province of Saskatchewan.

Someone with envy crying in the Liberal wasteland has called it a pollster's budget. I'll take that kind of back-handed compliment any day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the budget was just that – a people's budget. A budget for all people from the people's government. A budget for seniors, and a budget for youth, and a budget for women, a budget for homeowners, a budget for the handicapped, for small business, for the unemployed; a budget for all sectors of Saskatchewan.

It was a budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the single doubter out there who thought that the Progressive Conservatives really weren't all that concerned about seniors. And so we doubled the income supplement to seniors from \$25 to \$50, and we introduced a home repair program, which will run five years, and provide a grant of \$1,000 to our seniors.

It was a budget for the lonely sceptic, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who had been misled into believing somehow this was a “big business” government. Well, Mr. Speaker, this particular budget is chock-full of things that are attractive for small business, and you’ll notice the 2 per cent rise in the corporate tax on big business.

It was a budget for the scoffer who said that medicare would be gutted by the Progressive Conservative. And, of course we know that isn’t the case. We’ve seen the Minister of Health make some very significant announcements about health.

It was a budget that put the lie to the NDP propaganda which said that the deficit will be brought down on the backs of the low income earner, and the youth, and the aged, and the sick, and the middle income earner. We know, of course, that this is not the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Those are the ones that have benefited from this particular budget.

Mr. Speaker, this is not British Columbia, or Alberta, where massive tax increases or massive social cuts are the order of the day. This is not Manitoba, where the deficit rises, and the credit rating drops. This is Saskatchewan, where spending on social programs is increased, where the deficit comes down, and where targeted tax cuts take place to stimulate the economy.

This is Saskatchewan, where utility rates are kept to a minimum, where taxes do not rise, and where less government prevails. This is Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and Saskatchewan is Progressive Conservative, and that translates into sound management, fiscal prudence, economic creativity, and social responsibility.

I want to take some time, Mr. Speaker, to share with the House some of the key highlights from the social services budget this year which I believe will be a prime example of social responsibility, creative thinking, and sound management.

Now, I want to, briefly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, make mention of some of the issues that the members opposite have talked about when they have erroneously led the people of Saskatchewan to believe that there have been, in the words of the Leader of the Opposition, “massive social cuts.”

With regards to Valley View – and I know that the member opposite from Shaunavon will be interested in the Valley View situation. In 1980, the total staff at Valley View numbered 592, the residents 741, for a ratio of 0.8 to 1. In 1984, the residents have been reduced to 699 at that institution, the total staff was 513, the ratio 0.73 to 1 – virtually unchanged, Mr. Speaker, from the days when they were in power. Perhaps more importantly, though, the ratio of direct staff to residents – those that are providing the direct care and immediate concerns for those particular clients at Valley View – the ratio is as follows: in 1980, there were 376 direct staff, and in residents 741, for ratio of 0.51 to 1. In 1984, staff delivering direct care numbered 366, residents number, 699, the ratio today, 0.52 to 1 – in fact, a very modest if slight increase in terms of the ratio of staff providing direct care to the residents of Valley View. Certainly no cuts, no reductions, and I, in the near future, will be making some very significant announcements about an enhanced program for the people at Valley View.

Next week, I expect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to announce a major employment program for the handicapped people in the province of Saskatchewan. We know that handicapped clients, many of them, are employable. Unfortunately, employers have not been linked up with those particular clients that are employable, and I will be announcing a program which will provide significant benefits to many handicapped employables here in the province of Saskatchewan.

And what about seniors, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Were there any reductions to seniors? The grants to new activity centre construction have increased by 13.7 per cent, Mr. Speaker. I think that’s very significant.

In the area of direct overall grants to seniors, we see an increase this year over last year of 12.9 per cent. In the area of grants to handicapped, we see an increase overall of 27.9 per cent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, in the area of employment support programs, these are programs which are designed to provide employment activities for those people who are not able to find employment for themselves. The grants to employment support programs have increased, not 5 per cent, not 6 per cent, but 12 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the overall grants to community services — that's the large NGO sector in the province of Saskatchewan — the total moneys allocated to that particular sector have increased by 8.5 per cent.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we hear of increases, 12.9 per cent, 27 per cent, 12 per cent, 8.5 per cent, it puts the lie to the NDP propaganda that, in fact, there have been massive social cuts. On the contrary, there have been massive social service increases in the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — I could go on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to enumerate a number of other areas in which there are significant increases in services. I want to turn now to the topic which is of interest to many, many people in the province of Saskatchewan and that, of course, is the whole matter of welfare reform.

When this particular government took power, we indicated that it would be a priority of ours to review the outdated, outmoded, and archaic welfare system in the province of Saskatchewan and make the necessary changes that needed to be made.

And I am pleased to announce today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the main thrust of the reform measures in the welfare reform package will be to provide education, job training, and work experiences for over 6,000 welfare clients.

Welfare programs have for some time now been a cornerstone of social policy herein Canada, and indeed in Saskatchewan. Society has placed a high priority on providing government assistance to those who, temporarily or permanently, are unable to provide for themselves. Saskatchewan's welfare program, as we know it, was introduced over 15 years ago. Unfortunately, our government inherited an unproductive, an inequitable, and a most inefficient welfare system. The present program does not promote independence and self-reliance of clients. It does not develop the potential work skills of clients. By doing no more than handing out a welfare cheque each month to many long-term clients, we are, in fact, helping to lock some clients into the welfare syndrome. We need a fresh, creative, and productive approach which helps to develop the independence of many of the people that are on welfare.

Secondly, our present program is administratively inefficient. The taxpayer should no longer have to tolerate an archaic system where millions of dollars a year are overpaid through error and abuse.

And, thirdly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the present program is inequitable. The financial needs of single employables who require assistance for only an interim period are not as great as for people who require longer-term assistance because of disability or health or family concerns. Changes must be made, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

During the past year, we have been studying the problem, and we have been laying the groundwork for those new directions that are required, and I am pleased, therefore, to announce to the Assembly, and to the people of Saskatchewan, an 11-point program to reform Saskatchewan's welfare and income security plans under the heading of productive opportunities.

In the next 18 months, my department will provide 3,500 welfare clients with education, retraining, and job preparation experiences. These clients will continue to receive their welfare benefits, and, in addition, special allowances for child care clothing and transportation will be provided where necessary.

Secondly, in the next 18 months, my department will create up to 2,350 full-time employment opportunities for people now on welfare. Many of these jobs will become permanent. Again, special employment allowances for child care, for clothing, and transportation will also be provided where necessary.

And, thirdly, my department will also place 400 to 500 welfare clients in volunteer community service placements. These clients will receive a special allowance of \$50 per month in addition to their welfare assistance. All totalled, Mr. Deputy Speaker, over 6,000 productive opportunities will be provided to welfare clients in the next 18 months in the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — I believe we can all be proud, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Saskatchewan is the first province in Canada to initiate a major change in welfare policy of this magnitude, a magnitude, I might add, which is going to require that Saskatchewan's community colleges double their capacity to deliver adult basic education in the province of Saskatchewan.

One of my department officials indicates to me that this demand that this particular welfare reform program is going to place on the community colleges is similar to the demand that was placed upon the province of Saskatchewan in the post World War II years when a retraining program was mounted for World War II veterans. It is a major, indeed, a massive change in a productive direction as far as welfare is concerned.

Now, how will these clients participate in these productive opportunities? Clients who have been on welfare for periods exceeding three months will undergo an intensive assessment by social services staff to determine their education, their training, or work experience capabilities. Clients who will benefit most from education or training experiences will then be channelled into an intensive assessment through the community colleges, run by my colleague here, and they will determine the most appropriate type of education or training.

Clients who would benefit more from a direct job experience, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will be linked up with prospective employers through the Saskatchewan Employment Development Program, which will create 2,350 jobs in small business, municipal, and non-profit sectors. And I might indicate that many of those jobs created in the small business sector will, in fact, become permanent jobs. We know that on the basis of past experiences.

I'm pleased to announce, as well, that my department will hire an additional 21 workers in order that we can properly assess the needs of these welfare clients who require education and training and job preparation experiences.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate that the keystone of this particular program is something that has never happened before in Canada, to our knowledge, and that is that all of the clients who have been on welfare for a period of three months or more will, in fact, go through an intensive assessment, counselling program, one-on-one with a professional social worker, to help determine what is the best direction that that particular welfare client should go in terms of the productive opportunities available to them. Never done before in the province of Saskatchewan on the magnitude that we're doing it. Never done before in Canada as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make some announcements with regards to benefit restructuring.

I am pleased to announce that benefits to the almost 8,000 low-income families – families that are of deep concern to this government, Mr. Speaker – benefits to these almost 8,000 low-income families on the family income plan will increase 10 per cent from \$91 a month to \$100 a month. I believe that is a serious indication of the concern that this government has to provide assistance to low-income working families. Families are the backbone of Saskatchewan. As Minister of Social Services, I am concerned that we maintain the strength and integrity of families, and I believe this will help do that.

Welfare payments to large families will also increase slightly by \$5 a month for a family with five to seven members, and for \$10 a month for a family with over seven members, keeping in mind that there was a 6.5 per cent increase six months ago. The Minister of Finance has already announced, and I want to reiterate – and this is point six in our 11-point program – that maximum supplements to low-income seniors will double from \$25 a month up to \$50 a month under the Saskatchewan Income Plan. And point seven, benefits available to welfare clients in room and board situations: in most instances there will be an increase from \$150 to \$175 per month.

Maximum benefits for single employables without family obligations will be reduced, but greater assistance will be available through training, job creation, and employment counselling. Beginning May 1, the maximum benefit available to a single employable will be \$345 a month. I should add, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the average monthly payment to single employables, at present, is less than \$345 a month. At present, it is \$337 a month.

Other minor adjustments to our benefits scheme include limiting the income exemption for gifts and lotteries to \$200, reducing asset exemptions to bring them more in line with the rest of Canada to \$1,500 for singles and 3,000 for families, assessing tax rebates as income, and modifying the supplementary health coverage, as well. The 11th point of our welfare reform program is one that I know will be of interest to people in this Assembly. It certainly is of interest to the residents of Saskatchewan, I believe. On many occasions I have had parents and seniors and other individuals talk to me about their concern with regards to 16- and 17-year-olds being able to get welfare and move out on their own. It's a concern that I concur with. And beginning later this year, 16- and 17-year-olds will no longer be eligible for welfare under the Saskatchewan assistance plan. Instead, independent teenagers who do require assistance, for example, a single teen-age mother, they will be helped under The Family Services Act. This will enable us to provide those 16- and 17-year-olds with a more appropriate supervised environment than is possible under the present welfare program.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this 11-point welfare reform program will help foster independence for welfare clients. It will provide more support for families, for seniors, and for the handicapped. And it will save the taxpayer millions of dollars through increased efficiency. I believe it is a welfare reform program that all members in this House can indeed be proud of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — I want to end my speech today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by indicating that this particular welfare reform program, the massive increases in social services funding, are an indication that this government is providing a socially sensitive, forward-looking, creative, and productive approach to social policy in Saskatchewan. And I believe that we are, indeed, leading the way in Canada with regards to our social policy.

I certainly will be supporting the motion and I would ask all hon. members to do the same.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. ZAZELENCHUK: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure for me to

participate again in a budget debate. My remarks will not be all that lengthy, but I do have some important things to say.

And at the outset, I wanted to say I hope we do not have repeat performance of last night and an earlier occasion in this House. I refer specifically to the member of Quill Lakes who last night, while the Minister of Education was on her feet, was simply making fun of her and imitating her voice because it is somewhat higher than his; and at one time when the Leader of the Opposition stood in this House and challenged all government members to “stand up like a man” in this House. I want to assure those two members that all female members of the legislature are no less effective or capable members of this legislature, because in our lifetimes our partners may, or should, look somewhat different than theirs.

The term “budget debate” is used, but it has simply been nothing but a pleasure for me to represent the government, my constituency, and this budget. And I congratulate the Minister of Finance on his most recent success.

The opposition members criticize the budget, and I know that’s their job. And I even understand that normally that could be good for my constituents, but only if the opposition isn’t always negative, misleading, and hypocritical. My constituents should expect more from an opposition than an opposition that criticizes the government for dismissing a couple of hundred public service employees, but then do not tell you that for every public service position that was not filled, we created 100 positions in the private sector. And the opposition wants as few people as possible to know that our labour force has had the largest growth, as compared to any other province in Canada.

And people have a right to expect more from an opposition than an opposition who criticizes the government for no longer carrying certain drugs under the medicare program, but then not telling you that those drugs are no longer manufactured by the pharmaceutical companies.

I have here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a list of resolution submitted by NDP members o the last NDP annual convention. And I read from it one of their resolutions:

Be it further resolved that the NDP condemn the recent announcement that the Tory government will begin yet another study of day care.

What I also have here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a news report dated February 1984, that says the NDP will set up a task force to look into day care. Interesting, but not surprising. The opposition has the opportunity to do people a service, but they simply lose their credibility when they criticize our overall deficit, but then try to cover up the fact that just one corporation under their administration had even a larger deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I’m very excited about our budget for two reasons: it is reactive and pro-active, and the two actions nicely complement each other to bring service to people in Saskatchewan that they’ve never had before.

You’d think that any sensible government would react to this – a growing population of senior citizens – a growing population that some provinces will not have as many senior citizens as we have now, for perhaps 20 to 25 years; an express need by senior citizens for additional special care facilities, and assistance to allow them to remain in their own homes as long as possible.

Senior citizens for a long time have been wanting greater recognition by the former administration. Well, they got that recognition at election time. At the time of the 1975 election, single seniors received a supplement of \$20 a month, and married couples a supplement of \$36 a month. 1976 was not an election year, and it was not a year for increases for senior citizens. 1977 was not an election year, and not a year for increases for senior citizens. But, 1978 was an

election year, and seniors received a \$5 increase. 1979 was not an election year, and there was no increase for seniors again. 1980 was not an election year, and there's no increase for senior citizens. 1981 was not an election year, and there was no increase for senior citizens. In seven consecutive years, senior citizens received only one increase by the NDP government, and that was for \$5, and during an election year.

A Progressive Conservative government reacted in the following ways: we doubled the Saskatchewan Income Plan allowance for single seniors from \$25 to \$50 per month, or an increase of 100 per cent; and a 67 increase in the maximum allowance for couples, from 22.50 to 37.50 each – a 100 per cent increase for seniors, and a 67 per cent increase for seniors, and this is not an election year.

But then the member for Shaunavon stood in the House last week and had the audacity to say – and I have a copy of his remarks here – that this was an attempt to put money into the budget two months before an election, to try and trick senior citizens. This government doesn't react in desperation just prior to an election as the NDP have done. We act steadily on the concerns of individuals, and as I said a few minutes earlier, this demonstrates that we are responsibly reactive and pro-active. And I would like to begin making some remarks that show we are responsibly pro-active.

Very soon after taking office, the new Minister of Social Services initiated a seniors' conference which was held in Saskatoon. There were seniors represented from every part of the province, and I have here some actual quotes from some of those seniors who attended.

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

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

Excellent. The very best way to put democracy in action.

And these are just some of the comments from the delegates who attended that conference. And one of the recommendations made to the government – again another one of the recommendations made to the government from that conference – was acted upon in this budget. We introduced a new senior citizens' home repair program which will provide \$20 million to help elderly people stay in their own home.

We recently also expanded the seniors' provincial council from 11 members to 15. It now includes native representation and northern representation. Although native people and northerners have never been new to this province, they were not represented on the seniors' provincial council, and even though government members – NDP government members – were representing the North.

Now, my speech to this point has been highlighting only some of the areas where this government has been mainly reacting to individuals in a very responsible way. I constantly receive information from various departments giving me updated information on initiatives that they are taking. And I take just some time today to mention only some of those.

One important one is that now the Minister of Finance, who consults with more non-elected people around this province, representing different services and organizations in the community, to learn their understanding of the economy in their situations . . .

The Minister of Health has given approval for funding 15 pilot projects for special care homes. These projects will do two things: assist the elderly and disabled to remain as long as possible in their own homes, and give relief to family members who provide care to these individuals.

Also, a new \$100,000 Indian and native education development fund as an incentive aimed at stimulating and supporting development of native education programming in school divisions, has been introduced by the Minister of Education, along with a 5 per cent increase for a program called SUNTEP, an urban native teacher education program.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to spend some time on our social welfare reform initiatives. I sincerely believe these initiatives are going to be pleasing to most people. We have to really appreciate the average worker who, through their taxes, actually pay for more government services than they actually use.

Welfare benefits are a good example. Now some people need those benefits, and we're always going to provide them, but we really have responsibility to provide them, using taxpayers' money as efficiently and with as much foresight as possible.

Much of the money spent in the Department of Social Services is perhaps more obvious than money spent in other departments – for example, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, or the areas of Co-operative Development. And who in Saskatchewan hasn't at some time commented on the misuse of money spent by Social Services?

I'm pleased to see administrative improvements will be included, including improved verification and audit capacity.

These comments on the misuse of social service money is very widespread, so we felt it was time for a government to look at improving our operations and service to people, and looking at ways of directing that money to the people who really need it and to provide those benefits in a way that it would do those individuals the most good.

Now, yesterday in the House, the NDP members for Regina Centre read from a confidential document he wasn't supposed to have. And I've always questioned the integrity of someone who would read out loud, in a public forum as this, mail belonging to someone else. But the member for Regina Centre yesterday read from this document, and whosoever persevered after his opening remarks and were still listening to him, heard only half the story.

The NDP member for Regina Centre criticized us for taking some money from one spot of Social Services. And he didn't say we were enhancing the effectiveness of the whole department and, most importantly, enhancing the effectiveness of more individuals who need additional skills before they can get a job.

There's another example of the opposition being misleading, and here is yet another example of them being hypocritical. Resolution number 110 from the NDP convention reads as following:

Whereas extensive educational facilities are available and are not being fully utilized

And I would like to interject here and say that there are even more educational facilities being provided by this government. But the resolution reads:

Whereas extensive educational facilities are available and are not being fully utilized, and whereas people on welfare or under-employed desire to improve their educational qualifications, be it resolved as NDP policy that existing educational facilities be put to greater use, and that existing adult education programs be expanded for the education of needy adults to provide them with greater employment and income possibilities.

A resolution submitted by the NDP association for Regina Centre where Ned Shillington is a

sitting member, and who in this House yesterday criticized those initiatives by this government.

I would like to read to the Assembly our objectives for welfare reform, very briefly. They are as follows: to provide productive alternatives to welfare in the form of training and job opportunities; to provide equity and program benefits which is more related to the degree of client needs rather than general uniformity; and to make the program administratively more efficient and effective.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to say I certainly didn't talk about all the benefits to people from the budget, and I didn't even talk about all the benefits available to people from just the Department of Social Services. But I think most people are very pleased with this budget and understand the benefits it offers. I'm very eager to work with my constituents in the upcoming year until the next budget, doing whatever I can for them, and ensuring them again that their further concerns will be included in the next budget. I will definitely be supporting this budget, and I urge all members to do also.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to enter into this debate, Mr. Speaker, this debate on the Devine government's second or third deficit budget.

Like some of the other members who have already spoken before me. I would like to commend the Minister of Finance for his efforts last Wednesday when he delivered his budget speech. He almost succeeded in fooling the public, Mr. speaker. His plan was so crafty that he did succeed in fooling the press, even for a little while. But, Mr. Speaker, now that the public has begun to understand just what was in that budget, what really was in that budget, they aren't being fooled any more.

It appears that the Minister of Finance has clearly failed to use his silk purse speech to deliver his sow's ears budget. That was made very clear last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, less than 24 hours after the budget speech, when the minister of pot-holes and press releases fired more than 237 Department of Highways people with that very cruel and lame excuse that he is giving them the freedom of choice.

That's right, Mr. Speaker. Less than 24 hours after the budget speech, the people of Saskatchewan understood the realities of this budget – the real budget. Not a job creation budget, Mr. Speaker, but a jobs lost budget. Not meaningful help for small businesses, but more empty words and wishful thinking. Not real assistance for the hard-pressed agriculture producers of our province, but more hollow words and gimmicks.

Mr. Speaker, I would venture to guess that in the history of this Legislative Assembly, never have so many people been so disappointed in a budget so fast.

I would like to say a few words also, Mr. Speaker, about rural Saskatchewan and the Department of Rural Development. I'd like to say a few words about the rural, local governments who are facing many of the same problems. Rural municipalities face the same pressures as every level of government, and they continually find their costs increasing. And at the same time, they have had a limited revenue base on which to draw their revenues, which is mainly property taxes. This is why the NDP government introduced a revenue-sharing program. It was disappointed to see that the rural revenue sharing was increased by only 6.4 per cent this year, and at the same time education grants increased by only 5 per cent. That is not going to relieve the burden of property taxes for the farmers, Mr. Speaker, or for the business people, or the homeowners.

I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am very concerned about the problems facing rural municipalities. With a limited that base, with a very small population in many cases, it is becoming increasingly difficult to cope with the demand for services in a very adequate manner.

I note that a conference is being held this fall on a provincial, local government fiscal relations. I hope this conference can achieve some positive and worthwhile results, and I hope that attention is also given to adequate planning, good management and operations that are in tune with the 1980s and beyond that into the 1990s.

It is not only the municipalities, Mr. Speaker, that are facing problems, but small-business people. Small businesses today have similar problems as everybody else in this province. And, as New Democrats in Saskatchewan have always know, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people will only prosper when our vigorous small business sector prospers. It's as simple as that, Mr. Speaker.

Whether we talk of our larger cities like Regina and Saskatoon, or our smaller cities like Yorkton and Melville, or our sound, solid towns like Canora, Kamsack, in every case the situation is the same. The Saskatchewan economy prospers, Saskatchewan people prosper, only when our small businesses are doing well. New Democrats understand that.

We understand that dedicated businessmen are not easily swayed by empty slogans, empty words, an empty promises. All the talk in the world, Mr. Speaker, about the Premier's hope, his hope that we will be open for business, doesn't change the situation at all. It doesn't change the fact that the small-business people I know in my area and all over Saskatchewan are open for a lot more business than they are getting right now. They are open for more business than they've had for the last two years. The past two years have seen a fundamental change in the economic policies of the provincial government, Mr. Speaker, and a corresponding change in our economic performance.

Let's just take a look at the facts as they affect small business. In 1981, after 10 years of sound New Democratic policies, Saskatchewan had the highest growth rate in Canada. Both in 1982 and in 1983, Saskatchewan's economic performance was worse than the Canadian average. That's right, worse than the Canadian average. And, for those members opposite who don't wish to believe what every small businessman knows, I refer them to page 37 of the budget speech, delivered by the Minister of Finance last Wednesday. Page 37. And in 1983, Mr. Speaker, business bankruptcies in Canada declined by 5 per cent. But in Saskatchewan they increased by 12 per cent. More business bankruptcies in Saskatchewan under the Tories than in the rest of Canada.

And what about jobs, Mr. Speaker? Well, since the last election in 1982 the number of people on unemployment in our province has increased by 12,000 and those unemployed people are bad news for Saskatchewan small business.

A change of government, Mr. Speaker, and a change in policies is what's needed in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — New Tory policies to benefit big oil, big railroads, and big bureaucrats here in the Regina, are always talked about. But nothing, nothing but talk from this government. Endless, empty talk for the real taxpayers and the real small-business people of our province. Empty, endless talk, and no assistance.

All the small-business people that I've talked to, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency and elsewhere in the province, are all asking the same simple questions: why don't those Tories in Regina stop talking about small business and start doing something about our economy? Why don't they stop their foolish slogans and start doing something to manage our economy? Why aren't they doing something to get more jobs for our people, more prosperity for our Main Streets? Why don't they stop their silly slogans and gimmicks and their Regina-based programs, and trips around the world, and start doing something to get our provincial economy on the rise again?

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this budget has provided no answers to those questions. It's a do nothing budget for small-business people. It's a do-nothing budget for farmers in this province. In plain, Mr. Speaker, it's a budget that does very little for anyone.

In his speech the other day, Mr. Speaker, the premier of Saskatchewan said that we are . . . He called this budget the start, the budget that the Minister of Finance presented last Wednesday, that this is a budget, and it was significant of a start of a new era – a new era, Mr. Speaker. And I would say maybe he was right. It's an era of despair, uncertainty, and fear – fear in the minds of many people.

And I go to page 918, and the Premier of the province says:

This province was being watched by other administrations when Mr. Andrew was putting together his budget. They wanted to see if there was continuity. We said that we had a strategy, an industrial strategy, when we began, and now they're watching to find out, Mr. Speaker, if that strategy will continue.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that strategy did continue. It's a strategy that's directed towards big business, big farms, profits for those that have, and very little for the small-business people of this province that have done so much for Saskatchewan over the years.

A good example of that is what's happened recently in the province and that's . . . I've talked to some of the truckers. And not that long ago, the small truckers that had been providing service to many small communities in this province had been hauling fuel to the small towns, to the bulk stations, so that farmers, when they get out in the fields in the spring, can have that fuel there when it's required. These truckers were given notice by the big oil companies that they will no longer be hauling their fuel, because now the fuel will be hauled by just a few large companies – large trucking firms.

And I haven't heard the Minister of Agriculture or the Minister of Highways, the minister responsible for the highway traffic board, doing anything about what's happening to the small truckers in this province. Many of these small truckers have been in business since the 1940s. They have provided the kind of service that was required. It has been tried before, to go the route of large trucking firms, and it has proven unsuccessful.

We always will require these small business firms, the small truckers, and this government should be putting an emphasis on trying to see that the truckers are staying in business, that the small people on Main Street are staying in business, and that every small-business person in this province can prosper, and can continue to provide the kind of service that they have for many years in this province.

But, no, they won't do that, Mr. Speaker. They would rather see Wescan from Alberta come in here and haul the fuel. They will do it maybe under another name like Willm's or Paul's Hauling, but it's still the same company, and those are the ones that are allowed to come in. This is who this government is allowing to come in and take over the profits, the business, and the livelihood of every trucker in this province.

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The Minister of Highways says, "Just tell me how many of these truckers have gone broke." Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, when their contracts are cancelled in about a month's time, all of these truckers are going to be forced to sell out their equipment, or they'll be forced to haul for the large enterprises because they have financed heavily in buying new equipment to provide the kind of service that they expected they would be providing for many years. And now they're going to be forced to either sell at a loss or work for someone else. That is what this government is doing to the small truckers in this province, Mr. Speaker.

One other area, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to talk about for a short while, and that's health. Health is very important to many people in this province. When I was looking at some of the remarks made by the Minister of Health the other day, and he came up with a catchy little phrase that I'm sure everyone out there that didn't know better – and I'm sure everybody does know better except for the Minister of Health – and in his speech he said, "As part of the announcement I made last Friday, Mr. Speaker, I talked about a new innovative idea which is going to take place in this province, and that is building integrated facilities." Well, Mr. Speaker, it's anew innovative idea. And he goes on to say, "The first community to have one of these will be Lampman."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I hate to inform the Minister of Health that an integrated facility in my constituency, an integrated facility in the Canora constituency, one in Rosetown, one in Turtleford, has been operating for a while now. It's not a new innovative idea of the Minister of Health. If the Minister of Health knew anything about his department and what was happening in this province, he would have known that Lampman will not be the first integrated facility to be constructed in this province under the Minister of Health. They've been in operation before.

Mr. Speaker, that's how this government continues to operate. They say things that are not true. They try to make people believe what they are saying and doing is for the benefit of everyone, that it's new, it's innovative, and has never been tried anywhere before. But, Mr. Speaker, most of the people know better, and the people will indicate that to this government.

There has been a situation in my constituency, and that's a situation where the public health nurse has retired, and for some reason or other the minister has not been able to find a health nurse to replace the one that had retired. And I don't know if this is going to be similar to what's happened with the ag rep, where they will not be putting anyone in place because they can't find anyone, or they haven't found a suitable person or whatever other excuse they might use, but it seems to this point they haven't been able to find a health nurse. But, they do say that they will. Eventually they will fill the vacancy.

There is also a nursing home in Kamsack that has some financial problems, and if the Minister of Health is concerned about providing a service to senior citizens that require that service in the nursing homes, and if he was as concerned about nursing homes as they are about publicity, then he would put some of that money that they waste on all that publicity, and all that paper that they send out, and give some assistance to the Kamsack nursing home.

He had also announced a nursing home for Saltcoats – 30 homes, 30 beds to be built in Saltcoats, Mr. Speaker. Well, I agree that anywhere that we can build nursing homes and beds it is going to be an advantage for the senior citizens, but there is only one thing about this announcement, Mr. Speaker. In talking to the administrator at Yorkton of special care homes, they are not even aware of putting in an application to the minister for a nursing home at Saltcoats. The mayor of Saltcoats is not aware of any recent application being made from the town for a facility in Saltcoats. It appears, Mr. Speaker, that the only one that was aware of this was the Minister of Health. He somehow decided that Saltcoats needed a 30-bed nursing home when it's only about 20 miles from Yorkton, and Yorkton has been applying for additional space.

There are doctors in Yorkton, and there are facilities there now that could have been improved, but the minister decided to put it in Saltcoats. And I am glad that he put it somewhere – that there are going to be additional beds – but it's unfortunate that they wouldn't keep in touch with the people the way they say they do; and where they would have at least had the decency to contact the town council of Saltcoats, their home care board, or the special care board, and at least contact Yorkton and say that we are not going to put additional beds in Yorkton, but we are going to do it in Saltcoats instead. That, Mr. Speaker, I think is ludicrous, when a government and a minister who have not even had the decency to go out there and notify these people of what he is going to do in their area.

Mr. Speaker, I will now turn to another area where I have some interest in, and that's the area of highways. The Minister of Highways has also, I believe, been keeping in touch the way the Minister of Health has. He's been keeping in touch with his province, with the press releases, with a lot of paper. But not too many people seem to know exactly what he's doing or what's going on. That's the way of keeping in touch, Mr. Speaker.

And when you look at what happened with the 237 workers from Department of Highways, I think one would have to say that the Minister of Highways was nothing less than arrogant and insulting to the employees fired by his department, and he was insulting to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we are told in some flowery language coming from the massive PR corporation assembled by the PCs, that this is a good news budget. Good news for who, Mr. Speaker? Good news for those with the money – money enough to benefit from the tax credit schemes that have been unveiled – but nothing for the farmer or the small businessman who are just trying to make ends meet, Mr. Speaker; nothing for the average working person; nothing for those working on minimum wage, minimum wage which has been frozen for the last three years.

This budget is a classic Orwellian doublespeak which is becoming a trademark of this PC government. This is a good news budget, but no mention of the 237 people from the Department of Highways which have been fired. What good news was in that budget for those 237 people? Our Minister of Highways and master of the Orwellian doublespeak says that he preferred not to think of the terminations as firings. "They are simply changing bosses, transferred from the public sector to the private sector. It's freedom of choice. I'm not going to tell them where to go."

Well, Mr. Speaker, he told them where to go, all right. He told them that they no longer had a job and they could go. I think it was very generous of him. He has given some 237 employees the so-called freedom of opportunity. He is saying that these employees did not have the so-called freedom of opportunity before. They did not have this freedom of opportunity to seek employment in the private sector before he fired them. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what freedom he is talking about, or is this just so much arrogant doublespeak?

He thinks that the 237 employees are going to be fooled and that the people of this province are going to be fooled by this insulting and demeaning offers of freedom of opportunity. The only ones that will be fooled by this glib and arrogant claptrap coming from the minister himself and his colleagues, the colleagues in his cabinet, and the shrinking group of back-benchers (it seems we are always getting more cabinet ministers in). these 237 people and their families had this opportunity to seek employment in the private sector. They looked at the so-called opportunity and found it wanting. There was no opportunity. The minister himself is quoted as saying that it could cost them some pay, but it is going to give them the opportunity to work for the public sector. Let me refer to the previous budget for the Department of Highways, a budget foisted on the people of this province by good news Garner. Last time, in his last budget, 139 people were fired. And what did the minister of good news have to say? Let me quote from the *Leader-Post* report on his comments:

Garner said the lay-offs are a move from socialism to freedom for the employees who will now have the opportunity to work for the private sector.

What arrogant and insulting rubbish! Is the minister serious? Where in the PC campaign promises that they promised the people that they would get the freedom to be unemployed? Where is this demand for this sort of freedom? Who has been asking the minister that they wish to be free to be unemployed, and to look for work in the private sector? That minister says that there were jobs for them. They could bump or seek jobs, seek good fortunate in the so-called land of

opportunity.

We were told then, as we are being told now, that they would all be placed on employment lists on the road builders association. But what does the road builders association have to say? Well, in their letter that the Minister of Highways tabled, it stated that they currently had a surplus capacity in the industry. Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if that indicates that they have room for all those employees that he fired.

I have a letter here from an individual who happened to know one of the people that got fired. And it's a long letter and I'm just going to read parts of it here, and it said regarding the firings:

Similarly, with the massive number of job cuts made by Mr. Garner this past week, if the truth were only known, jobs for them simply will not be available in the private sector.

And this gentleman goes on to say:

Being humane and civilized with their actions is not even remotely considered by the current PC government. If Mr. Garner knew for a long time, which he stated, that these job cuts were coming, why were the employees the last to know?

I had the sad experience of seeing one of the laid-off employees who had 24 years of service, and deep roots established in his community, a few minutes after he received his walking papers. It made me think, what's the difference between this and what's going on in El Salvador or Argentina? For Mr. Garner to have provided all these unfortunate employees with a good six months notice so that they could have organized their personal affairs in a somewhat less chaotic manner . . .

That, Mr. Speaker, is what people out there are saying, and every one of those employees that were fired are saying that. "Why didn't he have the decency to let us know so we could arrange our homes and our move, if that is necessary?" He also goes on to say:

Something else that went by the wayside, with the PC government taking over this province in 1982, was freedom of speech. In the social studies classes in grade 8 my teacher taught me that there is a freedom of speech in Canada. However, at the present time, Saskatchewan cannot be considered as part of Canada because of this.

You won't find my name on the bottom of this letter on the off-chance that it might fall into the wrong hands.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is what is happening in this province; that is what is happening in this province. People are afraid, people are afraid to let themselves be found out that they are not happy with what's happening. There is fear in the hearts of people. And I can understand why this individual would say that, "What is so different here today than what's going on in El Salvador? It's the rule of the iron hand: "You do as we say or you will be unemployed, and we will also cut back your welfare if you wind up on welfare." That is what this government is saying, Mr. Speaker. Last week I happened to hear a comment made on an open-line show. There's a gentleman that phoned in and he said, "All ye that enter here beware." That was his comment to the open-line show on the radio. And he said, this government has gone to the point where there's no freedom. I think this letter indicated that. There is no more freedom in this province. People are afraid.

This government is so incompetent that we wound up with a \$800 million deficit. People don't have jobs. They are unemployed; they are on welfare. They are even afraid to say anything about it because they will be reprimanded one way or another. That is what this government is

doing; it's filling fear into the people. That is the way they like to rule, and that is the way they are trying to rule this province.

On Mr. Harasen's show, the open-line show on radio, Mr. Pedde from the road builders was interviewed and he said when he was asked, "Do you have jobs for the 237 people that have been fired, as Mr. Garner said?" Well, Mr. Pedde would not commit himself to saying that they had one job available for those people. He would not commit himself to hire one fired Highways individual. So that means that those people that have been fired are going to have to compete with everyone else that's out there looking for a job.

And I can't blame the road builders. They have been in business in this province for a long time, and they have their employees that they use from year to year, and they will probably be using those same employees. He said the only way they would probably hire more is if there was an increase in road building. Well, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the budget, you can see that there will be no increase in road construction this year. So, therefore, that would almost indicate that what Mr. Pedde says, that there will be no individuals hired that were fired from Department of Highways by the Minister of Highways.

Good news Garner, the Minister of Highways, says all those fired government employees will get jobs. But who is he fooling? There are many people seeking jobs in this province, and there are very few jobs available. The only news from good news Garner is bad news for the highway workers – bad news for those highways workers, and bad news for the public sector, bad news for highways workers in the private sector. It's bad news for the students that'll be graduating from technical schools. It's bad news for all of them because there will be no increase in road building and there will be no jobs available, and there are going to be more people out there competing and looking for jobs. As our Minister of Highways tumbles through the pot-holes, he is creating in the lives of thousands of Saskatchewan people, dismay. And they are very, very concerned about what's going to happen to them and their families. These disgraceful firings have been something that cannot be tolerated in this province, Mr. Speaker. He says they can go to work in the private sector, and it's easy to say that you can go to work in a private sector. You may have to work cheaper than you worked before; you may have to go on minimum wage, but we're giving you that freedom to do it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if they are able to go to work in the private sector, and it's easy to say that you can go to work in a private sector. You may have to work cheaper than you worked before; you may have to go on minimum wage, but we're giving you that freedom to do it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if they are able to go to work in the private sector, and what Mr. Garner's saying is true, if his statement is true – and we do not believe it is – then he is either saying that the management and staff of the Department of Highways are inefficient in the work that they are doing, or that the land of freedom and opportunity is characterized by wage cuts and loss in pensions and holiday benefits. Is that the good news for the news for the 237 fired employees?

But we need to examine the claims of the minister. We need to examine the claims that the private sector is able to build roads cheaper than the public sector. This same minister is the one who, last year at this time, made the same statements when he fired the 139 employees from his department, and he then admitted in this House that he had not done a cost comparison. And we challenged the minister to table in this legislature a full report on the evidence of the comparative efficiency of the public and the private sector road building.

And maybe the minister of good news should send a copy of his report to the city council in Saskatoon, who have recently had the freedom and opportunity of experiencing a cost overrun of some \$15.4 million on the recently completed 42nd Street bridge. I'm quoting from the February 22, 1984, issue of *Star-Phoenix*: "Increases were blamed on unexpectedly difficult building conditions and spiralling asphalt prices." And let me repeat, Mr. Speaker, "spiralling asphalt prices." The point that must be made is that the road builders, the contractors, of this province have served this province well and many contracts that they had done have been

excellent. But there is no substantial evidence that they are more or less efficient than those of their colleagues in the public sector.

But our good news minister stumbles on undaunted. He claims that at least with the private sector, you know the unit cost per mile of highways built, and not so with the public sector. And this is absolute rubbish and nonsense, and it's an insult to the intelligence of the people of Saskatchewan. The minister does not know the price of a mile of highway to be built by the private sector or the public sector? He does not know the cost of a mile of highway to be built by the private sector until the tenders come in, and he awards those tenders. But he should know the cost of a mile of highway which is going to be constructed by the public sector and the Department of Highways.

And the good news minister has a big shovel, Mr. Speaker, when he makes statements that he says, "It's much cheaper to go the private sector, and it's going to save millions of dollars for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan." Well, Mr. Speaker, he is shovelling with a very big shovel, and I'll tell you, he's not shovelling dirt or gravel. This is probably the most incredible point of all: the size of the minister's shovel.

The public relations budget, excluding the staff, is going to include 72 per cent more in the 1984-85 budget, more money to spread the good news around this province. I'm talking about the obscene increase in the budget of the public communications branch from 275,000 to 671,000, up almost \$400,000 with no change in staff.

It is clear that our minister of good news places his priorities in ad agencies and not in people, and with some reason, because his budget is so bad, the minister of good news is needing hundreds of thousands of dollars for increasing advertising to convince people otherwise.

This government has replaced action and performance with spinning wheels and clouds of dust, hoping that the true impact of the budget will not be noticed. Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan know what's in that budget and they know what they're going to say to this government.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to spend just a few minutes on agriculture. On course, the budget, again like most other areas, does very little for agriculture. But when all is done, when I looked at that budget and listened to it. I would have to conclude that there was an awful lot of ado about nothing, Mr. Speaker. There was no help in the budget for farmers who need help—none at all.

There was something in this budget for doctors and the lawyers and other wealth friends of this government who want to dabble a little bit of livestock, and buy something that they can get someone else to feed so they can make some money and take advantage of tax breaks without having to get any manure on their boots. The wealthy friends of the Tories have spare cash to invest so they can cut down their income tax. They will get the subsidy, while the farmer who is persuaded to feed the livestock in order to try and make ends meet, is left with the work and is not able to take advantage of that tax credit.

When I take a look at the minister's agricultural program, I find very little that will help farmers in my constituency. I can find plenty of the things that this government has done that will hurt farmers. I can find plenty of things that this government has done that are going to affect farmers drastically. One, they have destroyed the Crow; they put no effort into trying to save it. They have even tried to scuttle the branch line rehabilitation program. They got tough on FarmStart loans, and failed to reduce interest rates when they should have. Why couldn't the Minister of Agriculture have used the money for his Livestock Incentive Tax Credit to shore up the beef stabilization program? That would have helped all farmers, and it would have made their operations more worthwhile.

Why wouldn't the minister have done something to protect the farmers who are facing

foreclosures and seizures of their equipment? Why didn't he do something to help farmers who can't get operating . . . (inaudible) . . . There are cases where the banks have cut off operating lines of credit to some farmers. The banks, in effect, are choosing who is going to be a farmer in the future, and that's using their guide-lines and their criteria.

Some farmers are not going to have the cash to put their crops in this year. Some fuel dealers are on the verge of bankruptcy because farmers don't have the cash to pay their fuel bills.

Then there is the problem of interest rates. That is what is driving many farmers to the wall, particularly in my area, where farm consolidation, and heavy machinery investment, was undertaken in the last few years. The province cannot control interest rates, but if they got behind the farmers, they could help considerably. The ultimate betrayal of the farmer by this government was its two-faced stand on the Crow rate. The PC government tried to ride two horses, Mr. Speaker. On one hand they had to go along with their political friends who wanted to destroy the Crow, but on the other hand they tried to leave the impression that they wanted to keep the Crow. The truth was unveiled in the government's brief to the transport committee last summer. Not once in the brief did they say, "Keep the Crow," or words to like effect. Not once. I find the attempts of the PC government to tag the NDP with responsibility for the end of the Crow quite pathetic – that demonstrates just how bankrupt they are of any sound, honest ideas.

The Minister of Highways particularly likes to trot this one out whenever he has a problem answering a question. He tried to make out this week that a PC government led by Mr. Mulroney would see that the West got a fair deal. Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister knows full well that Mr. Mulroney said publicly that it was time to change the Crow. The minister also knows that if the PC government at Ottawa had stayed in power, they would have abolished the Crow. Under a PC government the Crow would have been just as surely destroyed as it was under a Liberal government. The fight to destroy the Crow would have been led by none other than Mr. Don Mazankowski, PC transport minister at the time, and the transport critic now. He was, in fact, already setting the stage. He didn't do this while the short-lived PC government was in power.

I find it very strange, Mr. Speaker, to see the PC government talk in such flowery terms about commerce and agriculture, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, they continue to whittle away and erode the Department of Agriculture.

Only two branches, Mr. Speaker – with regional extension and irrigation – are getting an increase in personnel this year. Several others are getting cuts. Administrative services, family farm improvement branch, animal industry branch, plant industry branch, marketing and economics, agricultural implements board, Sask farm ownership board, the lands branch, community pastures – all of these operations are being cut back. And that result is a drop of 17.4 person-years of employment in the Department of Agriculture.

However, with respect to the expansion of the regional extension branch, there are a couple of matters I would like to discuss with the minister. The Minister of Agriculture, in a statement in the last session, and I'll quote what he said, and this is in regard to the Wilkie and Unity ag rep, and he says in a statement he made, and he was questioned on it:

What I'm saying to you, is if one-half of the ag rep's time is spent travelling, then it seems to me that if he could be put in the centre of the travel time, in the centre of the travel area, then he is going to be able to provide more service to more farmers, and that's what this particular Department of Agriculture is interested in doing.

That's what that department is interested in doing, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that was what he said in the last session. But what's he saying now? All we have to do is look, not at what's happened at Wilkie and Unity, but go to Kamsack. They moved

the ag rep out of Kamsack. And for a time they didn't replace that ag rep. They kept saying that, yes, we will find an ag rep and we'll replace him in that area. When we move an ag rep, we'll put another one in. We believe in moving ag reps to save time and to give better service for the farmers.

Well, Mr. Speaker, somehow what the minister says on one hand isn't necessarily what he does on the other, and that seems to be what this government is all about. They decided in their wisdom that they wouldn't replace the ag rep at Kamsack. I don't know if that's a political move or what. But they decided in their wisdom they wouldn't replace him.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what did they do? Were they trying to save money? Were they trying to provide better service for the farmers in district 18? Mr. Speaker, if they were trying to do that, they sure didn't do it in a way that it would have benefited everyone. No, they went and didn't replace the ag rep at Kamsack. But they put an ag rep into Canora constituency. They've now got two ag reps in district 19 and in another constituency. That's where they put the ag reps. They've got two of them there.

And the minister said that it was better to put an ag rep in the centre of a constituency – as the way it was in Kamsack – so he can better serve more people and save on travelling time. No, they've gone and put him in Canora, where he's going to have to travel from outside his district into another district to look after district 18.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, it was bad enough that they put an ag rep into this different district – two ag reps in a different district – but they went and they told the ag rep that was in that area for years, that has established a good contact and rapport with the farmers of that area, and has put together many programs that would benefit the farmers in district 19, they told that ag rep in district 19 that he will now have to look after district 18. And they put the new ag rep into district 19.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what nonsense. How could any government say that what they are doing is somehow going to benefit the farmers in Saskatchewan, or in either one of those two districts? They used an ag rep that had only two years to retirement. And I don't know if they are trying to save money on retirement or what, but for some reason they figured that they were going to put the pressure on this ag rep and put him into a different district.

Mr. Speaker, I surely don't know what the purpose behind this government is and the things that they do, and I'm not sure that anyone understands just what it is that they are trying to do.

Mr. Speaker, after reviewing this government's program in agriculture, it has increased my concern for the future of the family farm. We know that the family farm has been fighting. The farmers that have these family farms have been fighting a tough battle for a long time. The NDP government introduced many programs to help the family farm, but the approach of this government is taking an entirely different direction. When you strip away all that fluff and gloss, you see that they are steering agriculture in the direction of corporate farming. In many cases, it won't be farmers who determine what rural life is all about. It will be the government's corporate friends. That is a major reason why I think this government needs to be defeated in the next election. That is a major reason why I think this government needs to be defeated in the next election, Mr. Speaker.

It would be a sad day if the PC government is given another chance to continue its destructive course in this province. I am determined to see that Saskatchewan is put back on the path of progress. That can only come about with the defeat of this PC government, and with the election of an NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would only like to say, and before I conclude my remarks: this

budget has been so empty of ideas and so empty of good programs, programs that would help people. This budget has done very little for anyone.

There's one group that has specifically been neglected in this budget. They have been neglected by this government. And I would like to say a few words about this one group – and that is our young people of Saskatchewan.

To be sure, this Tory government likes to talk about what it is going to do for the young people. But when they remember the hollow rhetoric of last year's budget speech and its bold talk of jobs for our youth – bold talk, Mr. Speaker, but only talk. They are now one year later – one year after that inadequate budget of last year – and now we find that, in reality, there are actually 3,000 fewer jobs for young people; 3,000 fewer young people employed in our province than there were a year ago.

And for those members opposite who would like to dispute that fact, I would like to invite them to first check the monthly employment figures published by the Premier's own department. That is why our young people are feeling betrayed, Mr. Speaker. Those on the farm, those in our small communities, those in the cities, and those in our universities and technical schools – they are all feeling betrayed by this Tory government, which for them has been all slogans and no performance; all talk and no action.

It is for this reason, Mr. Speaker, for these many reasons, the huge growth in this deficit budget – a deficit budget that is going to eventually mean more money out of the taxpayers' pockets, higher interest rates going up. The more deficit you run up, the higher the interest rates are going to be eventually.

Mr. Speaker, that is what this government is heading for. It is a betrayal of our agriculture producers, of our small businessman, of our young people. It is a budget that has done nothing for anyone, and because for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I'll be opposing the main motion of the Minister of Finance, and supporting the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pleasure to participate in the budget debate and, of course, joining in the congratulations, the well-deserved congratulations to my colleague, the Minister of Finance, on an excellent budget, a budget which speaks resoundingly for itself.

I believe governments in every province across Canada, all levels of government, have a great deal to learn from Mr. Andrew's budget. You would have to say it is the first real Tory budget ever seen in Saskatchewan. It stands apart from Canadian provincial and federal budgets of recent history.

The annual deficit has been reduced in a sensible and painless fashion by 20 per cent. The health care system is being improved . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, I see I'm going to have just a minor piece of competition from my good friend on the other side. I must say the member from Pelly, a most modest man, with much to be modest about.

Mr. Speaker, the elderly are receiving long-awaited recognition and support. The welfare system is being made relevant, as Saskatchewan citizens are being offered opportunities for education and training to prepare them to contribute to the economic and social development of this province as never before. This is evidenced clearly by the increases in the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower's budget by my colleague, the Minister of Finance, for the 1984-85 fiscal year.

Members of this Assembly should know that in the period since Progressive Conservatives took office, post-secondary education in Saskatchewan has realized a 50 per cent increase in funding.

Compared to the last NDP budget, 86 million more dollars will go into post-secondary education. Clearly, the emphasis now is on giving our citizens an environment for personal growth.

We Conservatives have targeted 8 per cent of the total provincial program budget to my department, the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower, and that compares to 7.5 per cent in 1983-84. Now 0.5 of 1 per cent in itself may not seem large. However, Mr. Speaker, in a budget of \$3 billion, this amounts to \$24 million, which the citizens in Saskatchewan, particularly those who are attempting to improve their lot, I contend that is significant.

Does it not appear more progressive to assist people into education than to leave them drowning on social assistance? Is it not more progressive to provide educational opportunities in Saskatchewan than to export our young to other provinces?

Most of the members of this Assembly are anxious to hear a description of how \$265.1 million will be spent, and I assume the opposition members, those who are left, will wish they didn't have ears at this point. This sum is approximately 34.4 million more dollars than the '83-84 department estimates. This is just about a 15 per cent increase in '84-85 for ongoing education and manpower programs.

Mr. Speaker, universities will receive a 5 per cent increase in funding, which provides a total of \$132.5 million to support university education in Saskatchewan. Furthermore, the University of Saskatchewan will receive \$11.7 million in capital grants; \$8.3 million of which goes to the continuing construction of a new \$17.75 million geology building, one which, I may add, the opposition would not approve. The University of Regina will receive close to \$1 million in capital grants.

These sums do not reflect capital grants that other government departments, such as Saskatchewan Agriculture, and Science and Technology, will be forwarding to universities. I fail to see how opposition members, and others, can argue against the 31.5 per cent more money granted to universities while Progressive Conservatives have controlled the public purse.

In 1981-82, there was 100 million designated for universities. Three budgets later, there is \$132 million designated for universities. Now that, Mr. Speaker, is a real increase of \$32 million. And somehow the NDP have tried to spread the myth that in some way, the most parsimonious facet of the public expenditure has been to the universities.

Perhaps it is worthwhile, Mr. Speaker, comparing the record just a trifle on this. Leo Kristjanson, president of the University of Saskatchewan, in his address to fall senate, said, and I quote:

Capital and equipment expenditures, delayed up to a decade (the decade of the 1970s), have placed physical limits on the efforts of staff to maintain the quality of education.

And who was in office in the decade in 1970s? The opposition sitting across the floor, where they richly deserve to be, sitting in opposition.

Let's take this argument a little further, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to quote a headline in the October 20 . . . Pardon me, 1981 *Leader-Post* stated: "Social spending has slowed in the province." October 20, 1981.

Remember who was in power then? Remember who the . . . Anybody remember the premier then? The article reads:

Saskatchewan's government has shown a disturbing trend toward slowing down spending on social programs in the past five years, a University of Regina professor says.

“Since 1976, despite the fact that our provincial wealth has been growing strongly, the proportion of it that the government spends on the departments of health, education and social services has been declining,” Graham Riches, assistant dean of the university’s faculty of social work, said.

The article states that the NDP government social spending declined from 10 per cent of total provincial wealth in 1976 to 9.3 per cent in 1981.

But here’s an interesting part. Let’s hear what the hon. member from Shaunavon, when at that point he was the minister of social services, had to say in reply to the reporter’s inquiry about this declining social spending. This is what the hon. member from Shaunavon had to say, and I quote:

There have been reductions in staff in certain areas of social programs. It’s a process of belt-tightening to get the house in order.

The same member, Mr. Speaker, who is now being critical of our government when we talk about belt-tightening. He went on to say that in the mid-1970s, the provincial government (and I quote): “. . . invested heavily in energy and other programs outside the social sector.” Energy, \$600 million into uranium mines.

These are the very same mines they’re now talking about closing down, and throwing thousands of people out of work, closing the doors and walking away.

And other programs, other programs outside the social sector – what kind of other programs? Well, we saw an alarming growth in the number of government buildings like the T.C. Douglas Building, the C.M. Fines Building, the J. Auburn Pepper Building, Kramer Place. What were they doing with the public purse, Mr. Speaker? They were building edifices to their own glory with the public purse, and they were not spending it in the social areas of health or education.

While on the subject of universities, Mr. Speaker, I should comment on the student aid fund which is used in large measure by university students. In the last NDP budget presented to this Assembly, there was \$5 million allocated in the fund. This budget has more than doubled that amount, proving this government’s concern for young people who have the ambition and the desire to learn.

Turning now to technical institutes, and this may well be an area of particular interest to the members of the opposition, because technical institutes, Mr. Speaker, appear, judging by the attention or the lack of attention which they gave the institutes, would appear to be saying that they may be interested in hearing about.

Kelsey Institute in Saskatoon received \$11.6 million from the last NDP budget. Three budgets later, Kelsey is receiving \$18.1 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — And this is an increase of more than 56 per cent in funding in three years. Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw received \$8.7 million in funding from the NDP in their last budget. This year the institute receives \$13.4 million, which is a 54 per cent increase in three Progressive Conservative budgets. Wascana Institute in Regina was languishing in the post-secondary education wilderness of NDP budgets, receiving \$7.4 million from the now opposition’s last effort. This year, the Wascana technical institute receives \$17.5 million, an increase of 136 per cent – 136 per cent over the days of state socialism in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, for the sake of post-secondary education in Saskatchewan, let us pray those days never return.

This year will see in excess of \$1.2 million allocated to the new Prince Albert technical institute facility, which features so prominently in institute expansion and northern training plans. And this does not include funds allocated to Saskatchewan Supply and Services.

The Meadow Lake and Prince Albert vocational centres this year will receive over \$2 million, which is \$640,000 more than the last NDP administrative allocated – a 47 per cent increase since those socialists were gunned out of office.

Community colleges this year receive an increase of 6 per cent over last year. The total increase in funding to community colleges in three budgets equals nearly \$2 million. This does not include the funding contained in a new initiative, the Saskatchewan Skills Development Program, which can be described in a little further detail in a moment, and which, of course, relies to a great extent on community college facilities.

I believe the citizens of our province can identify their provincial government as being able to manage public affairs in a business-like, frugal, yet socially responsible manner. It must be recognized by now that socialism is too costly, wasteful, and unmanageable in this era of changing priorities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — My department offers a variety of exciting programs in 1984-85. The youth services branch will be very busy administering a 91.5 per cent increase in funding, including the introduction of a youth-specific 30-week-long job creation program. Last year, youth services received in estimates, \$2.74 million. This year it will be \$5.74 million.

Saskatchewan Opportunities '84 is a student summer employment program in a second year of service to employers and post-secondary students. We anticipate the creation of 2,600 jobs in this program.

Access Youth Employment is a 24- to 30-week youth employment program costing \$3 million, which we expect will create 1,150 jobs for young people between the ages of 15 to 24. And I want to assure the member for Quill Lakes, who unfortunately isn't here right now, that those of his relatives who are still out of work – I'm sorry, but nepotism doesn't work with this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — Mr. Speaker, Access Youth Employment and Saskatchewan Opportunities '84 both operate on a wage subsidy of \$2.50 per hour to employers. Farmers, business people, non-government organizations, local governments – these employers will participate in the creation of 3,750 jobs for our youth.

I see we have another member joined us, the member for Regina Centre. Welcome back, sir. I always enjoy the little exchanges, especially when he's speaking from and through the seat of his pants.

Mr. Speaker, respecting Saskatchewan Opportunities '84, the officials in my department estimate that \$5 million will be paid to students to assist them in financing their continuing education.

The Saskatchewan Skills Development Program, which I mentioned already, is the kind of initiative that people expect, but rarely see, from governments. With the expenditure of \$5.1 million, 3,500 Saskatchewan Assistance Plan recipients will be offered a challenging alternative, and I believe many of them would jump at the chance for self-improvement. The aim of the program is to prepare individuals for a productive and rewarding future.

This program is a joint undertaking between my department and the Department of Social Services. The program beneficiaries will engage in academic upgrading or skill development courses at the community colleges, the technical institutes, and the vocational centres of our province.

This government is confident that a \$5 million public investment in those who depend on welfare, and who are capable and want to work, will prove worthwhile. My department staff looks forward to working with the offices of Social Services to make this program a popular alternative for these Saskatchewan citizens.

Saskatchewan skills extension is at the same relative level as in 1983-84, but, through the reallocation of funding, more dollars will be available for student programming services.

A valuable source of funding to Advanced Education and Manpower emerges from the National Training Act and federal-provincial training agreements under the act. My department has been aggressive in pursuing these funding avenues and with a good deal of success. The native services branch of my department operates the Native Career Development Program with an increase of \$93,000, a 30 per cent increase in funding for a program which assists employers in recruiting native adults.

The vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons receives a 5 per cent funding increase for 1984-85. This program engages in all activities surrounding work-force orientation of the disabled.

The women's services branch receives funding at the same level as last year to ensure that the myriad of public information services offered by the branch will be maintained. Educating, altering images in perceptions, and informing women of a rapidly changing labour market continue to be branch priorities.

Finally, my remarks would not be complete if I did not make an announcement about high technology education for Saskatchewan. During the second half of 1983, a special task force on high technology was preparing a report for my office on technology and related training and retraining needs. The task force indicated that retraining of the existing work-force was a prime concern and recommended that a special new unit for that purpose be established at Kelsey Institute.

The government has accepted this recommendation, and I will soon announce details of the advanced technology training centre in Saskatoon. The initiative required to establish this centre demonstrates the government's support, encouragement, and faith in the continued growth of Saskatchewan's vital research and development sector.

In addition, this government believes that we must facilitate the necessary co-operation between education, business, labour, and government sectors to achieve the required levels of education, training, and employment. To this end, a group of industry and labour representatives from 15 different sectors of the economy have formed the Saskatchewan Industrial Training Advisory Committee to advise me on matters related to ongoing training in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken at length about my department. I am thrilled by the tremendous task before me, and seeing to the proper management of funds allocated to Advanced Education and Manpower.

Most importantly, I am delighted by, and grateful for, the performance and support of my officials and their staff in Advanced Education and Manpower. I believe they are well-prepared and anxious to begin fiscal year 1984-85, especially with the show of confidence given to them and to me by the Premier, the finance minister, and the cabinet in this budget.

You know, listening to the opposition, Mr. Speaker, I have to say it's only natural, it's only natural and very easy to want to keep things just the way they are. The status quo of life may be far more appealing than any new course because it is known, it is safe, and it is predictable. And that's why ruts are formed. And we all fall into them, sometimes only for a few months, sometimes the NDP for 40 or 50 years, sometimes a lifetime.

But very often the life we've grown used to is not such a great life after all. And maybe a bold step, a chance taken, could lead to more accomplishment, satisfaction, and happiness. Mr. Speaker, there's an old song that says, "Open a new window, open a new door; travel a new highway you've never been on before."

Mr. Speaker, members of the Assembly, I am proud to say that all of us in Advanced Education and Manpower have the resolve to open a new window, and we look forward with enthusiasm to travelling on the new highway charted by the Minister of Finance in this excellent budget.

Mr. Speaker, I am more than pleased – I am thrilled – and I am delighted to support the main motion, and I will be more than pleased to join in voting down any asinine suggestion made by the opposition for change. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MRS. CASWELL: — I think often we forget the progress that has been made in our constituency. There are a few highlights that have happened since April 26, 1982.

The St. George's Senior Citizens Residence was opened. A new Saskatoon convalescent home was built. There's been increased funding at St. Paul's Hospital to decrease the waiting list – such a hardship for my seniors and the sick. There's been renovations announced at Oliver Lodge nursing home. The tax off gas, the tax off children's clothing, and now the tax off power bills for your home has greatly helped my constituency. The senior citizens welcome increased payments to single seniors. They are pleased with the program to help seniors stay in their homes by enriched housing. There has been renovations completed at Caswell School. And yes, a new high tech centre is being opened at Kelsey Institute, and I thank the Minister of Advanced Education for his wisdom.

There is more technology training and basic adult education training so that my people can compete in the job market. But there is no term sweeter to my ears than welfare reform. And I can think of no area of government that needs reform more than the whole area of welfare. I say this, not because I am concerned that some family is being helped by the public purse, I say this because I have seen too many individuals and families harmed by the welfare system. Firstly, I would like to state a few personal credentials I have to speak on this subject. My mother was left with nine children to feed, clothe, and educate while her husband was hospitalized. In a few years she would be a widow. She was quite prepared to farm herself, but the state, in its ever-knowing benefice, deemed it fit that she be forced to liquidate most of her assets and they would dole out her money (not welfare money, but the farm's money), to her as they saw fit. Of course, this was soon exhausted, and the state, because of its power to form a decision over our money, forced my mother to live on welfare.

However, that situation was so degrading to her she chose to scrub floors for her neighbours than to live off the public purse. By this time she was making less than she would have on welfare, but she preferred it. She eventually acquired steady employment. By taking a correspondence course, she was able to reach a departmental supervisory level in a large nursing home and later a regional hospital.

I remember her telling me, "There's nothing more degrading than having someone making a salary, while single, three times as high as my income, advising me on how to spend my money

while having nine dependants.”

There is one thing that stands out. We were at a political meeting, the first in my life. A Cy MacDonald was speaking in the Davidson town hall. It was great stuff and he went on to the present monuments to the CCF at that time. But the most intriguing statement was, as we were driving home, she said, “I’m so glad that I can finally publicly tell people what my politics are.”

It is hard to believe that even in the ’50s the CCF, the so-called party of the social conscience . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, not in those days . . . were creating such a fear among the population that someone who was having her money doled out to her would be afraid to have political allegiance openly known to be different than the ruling machine.

There are some people who wish to remind people that I used to be, for a short time, a socialist. I just say to that: some people grow up, and some people in the corner don’t.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MRS. CASWELL: — Living on welfare and being involved in the bureaucracy of the Department of Social Services creates fear. There is fear you will offend your worker; the fear they will take away needed help before you can adequately get a job. There is fear your children will not have adequate clothes. They will fear that there would be a major unexpected expense. There is fear the groceries may run out before the month ends.

I have noticed, particularly in the city, that being on welfare puts your children in jeopardy. The majority of children are apprehended from homes where the family has one parent and is living on social assistance. There is nothing in the acceptance of a welfare cheque that renders a person an unfit mother or father. Yet people tell me, when they are on welfare, they are always suspect.

They say a child from a wealthy home doing poorly in school is classified as being bored – bored because the work is not challenging. If the family is one welfare, that child is more likely to be deemed a problem child with learning disabilities caused, no doubt, by an inadequacy of home life. A child with patches on his jeans from a welfare home is poorly dressed. From a wealthy home, with patches on his jeans, he is expressing individuality.

I was blessed with a rich home. We were occasionally short of money, but we were allowed to think that any temporary shortage, or no money, was no excuse to have low expectations, or to shrug responsibility. Now, more than ever, it seems those who are on the low rung of the economic scale are treated by others as if they are also stupid, they are irresponsible, their parents are the worst thing that happened to them.

Now, of course, there are people who happen to be short of money, who may have other problems. It is also true that those people with a great deal of money may have problems. But often, to people who must live on welfare, it appears they are taught to see themselves as perpetual dregs on society. Their children, and their future children, are pollution interfering with the Margaret Sanger’s race of thoroughbreds. Their children are expected to do poorly in school, and often, therefore, have problems in school.

This is people who have never lived on the receiving end of the welfare state, have a romanticized view that a giant bureaucracy spends its time lardering out compassion, security, and therapy to a willing and thankful population. Perhaps it is time there are people who are willing to say publicly, the safety net of the welfare state is often a tangled web with no escape holes.

I may not be giving recognition to the conscientious and caring people who treat people, irrespective of circumstances, with dignity, but let me err on the side of defending the

defenceless.

Over and over again, I have heard people say the worst thing about welfare. "It is so difficult to get off it. Once you've been on it, they've got you," they say. They feel they are often being used an excuse for a well-paid bureaucracy to expand itself and perpetuate itself.

There seems to be a few general conclusions on what it's like to be on welfare. It is degrading. It is perpetuating. It is a trap. Few people want to be on welfare. Most people would rather work in or out of their homes, as long as their children's needs for a parent's presence is adequately met. Most people do not want welfare to be a permanent way of life for themselves, and certainly not for their children.

Being on welfare does not mean you are stupid, never employable, do not love and work for your children. It does not mean that you cannot have economic ambitions realized. I welcome welfare reform because the people on welfare need a system that is truly a help system, not a hindrance system. People need a system that encourages initiative and productivity, and treats the individual with respect and dignity.

Welfare has become a system that turns someone who is temporarily a victim of circumstance to someone who is, by definition, a victim. The welfare system, for too long, has existed for the bureaucracy, and now must exist for the people who truly need help. That help must be administered in such a way that it does not create more and more problems for the person who supposedly is to be helped.

And yes, what, you say, what about the welfare rip-off artists? People who have worked hard to get what they have, hate dishonesty and hate waste. My constituents welcome welfare reform. And, just for the record, let me say the welfare reform and getting rid of abuse does not mean we are necessarily assuming that the poor are dishonest. The man who was administering my family's income eventually was charged with misuse of funds.

George Gilder, *Wealth and Poverty*, has written a definitive book to explain how the leftists' welfare programs have harmed the family and has eroded the possibility of their overcoming poverty.

In the '60s, natives on the reserves told me welfare is destroying their communities, but people with a vested interest in administering welfare did not think it was in their best interests that those voices should be heard.

Welfare reform cannot be addressed without a total picture. I congratulate the Premier, the Minister of Finance, and the cabinet ministers who worked out an exciting budget that will lead to new and exciting business opportunities in Saskatchewan. Over and over again, the people have been telling us what is needed is jobs. And this budget creates jobs.

Now I would like to explain something that the NDP does not understand, but the union workers in my area understand very well. Businesses, not unions, create jobs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MRS. CASWELL: — Our government has told the people of Saskatchewan: we want you to create the jobs to provide economic freedom and a future for you and yours. We refuse to continue to keep a whole society on the welfare roll by unnecessary bureaucracy, by political patronage grants, by make-work jobs that are meaningless. I assure you, there are more people on welfare than those who draw a meagre welfare cheque.

The NDP David Lewis used to talk about the corporate welfare bums. He neglected to mention the system of bureaucratic welfare bums the NDP would foster.

We refuse to sell you the old line, “We’re looking after you, so shut up and be grateful.” Instead we have said to the people, “You have energy, you have enthusiasm, you have imagination. Create those jobs in areas that are not yet here. Discover those possibilities that will benefit us all. We will get out of your way. We won’t burden you with taxes and regulations that will choke you before you start.”

Free enterprise is not for the wealthy, but for . . . Nor for the big businesses. Free enterprise is needed for the people who want to develop opportunities not yet developed, who want to discover products not yet discovered. Free enterprise is needed to create an economic climate for those who are caught in the tangled web of the welfare state, who want freedom and dignity for their families.

April 26, 1982 was an exciting and freeing day for the people of Saskatchewan. March 21, 1984 was no less a landmark for freedom, for economic freedom which leads to other freedoms. It is with enthusiasm and gratitude that I will be supporting this budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MRS. CASWELL: — People have suffered enough from government protectionism. My constituents have suffered enough from unemployment. They want jobs. No government can solve everybody’s problems. If it claims it can, then we know it is a government that is dangerous and regressive.

Our government came to power to free people, not to control them. It acts on responsibility to give people the opportunity to solve their own problems, to use their own assets and abilities. This is a responsible and, yes, moral budget, because it gives power back to the individual.

Thank you, Mr. Premier. Thank you, Minister of Finance. Thank you, my colleagues, for this budget. Thank you for listening to the people of Saskatoon Westmount, and to the rest of Saskatchewan. I call it 5 o’clock.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 5:06 p.m.