

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

April 3, 1984

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**MR. RYBCHUK:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, twelve 16 and 17-year-olds from Cochrane High School that is situated in my constituency of Regina Victoria. They're seated in the west gallery, and accompanied with teacher, Donna Hanson. I wish them an educational and pleasant stay here, and I'm looking forward to meeting them after question period. I would ask all members to welcome them here appropriately.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MS. ZAZELENCHUK:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, approximately 30 grade 7 students from Princess Alexandra school in Saskatoon.

They are accompanied by their teacher, Dr. Joe Lozinski, and two chaperons, Sharon Cousins and Mrs. Wilson. I'll be meeting with this group at about 3 o'clock for pictures and refreshments, and I'd like all members to join with me in welcoming them here.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. THOMPSON:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to also to introduce you, and through you to the other members, a group of grade 4 students from the St. Pascal School in Green Lake. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Lorne Hanowski, and their chaperons, Howard and Gloria Sinclair.

This group of students from Green Lake are here today in Regina touring such facilities as the new CBC broadcast centre, and the RCMP barracks, and other institutions in the city.

I would like all members to welcome the grade 4 group and their teacher and chaperons to the legislature, and we all wish you a safe journey home.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. FOLK:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly today, a group of curlers who recently won Canadian championships for our province.

First of all, we have with us the 1984 Canadian Senior Ladies Curling Champions. They are seated up in the Speaker's gallery. Would you please stand, ladies. We have with us: skip, Evelyn Krahn; Twyla Widdifield, Shirley Little, and June Kaufman.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. FOLK:** — Mr. Speaker, this team — they've been in the Canadians the last few years, and I think they probably set a record for wrapping up a Canadian championship with three or four rounds to go. So heartiest congratulations, ladies.

The other team we have with us today are the 1984 Canadian Mixed Curling Champions: skip,

April 3, 1984

Randy Woytowich; third, Kathy Fahlman; second, Brian McCusker; and the lead, Jan Betker, has not been able to be with us today.

More recently, in Prince Albert, just a week or so ago, successfully defended the Canadian Mixed Curling Championship for our province and, to my knowledge, the first time ever that a team has gone through the Canadian Mixed Curling Championships undefeated, and certainly a feat everybody can be proud of.

Not only that, but these two teams for Saskatchewan broke the Manitoba string that was prevalent up until two weeks ago.

So, on behalf of all the members here, and all the curlers, and all the people in Saskatchewan – congratulations, and keep up the good work.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. PICKERING:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the Minister of Culture and Recreation in congratulating the Ev Krahn team, and Randy Woytowich team. We knew when they won the province that they were worthy representatives of our province. And I certainly congratulate them on winning, and bringing the championship back to our province.

I've had the opportunity on numerous occasions to represent the province, and didn't bring such a championship back. But, like Same Richardson would say, "It's better to be a has-been than a never-was."

Again, congratulations, and thanks for joining us today.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Add my word of congratulation, and I emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that when it comes to curling, I'm in the category of a "never-was." And I do wish to congratulate, on behalf of the opposition, the Ev Krahn rink. We had an opportunity to extend congratulations to them on another occasion. And to the Randy Woytowich rink, I was up in Prince Albert at the time that that championship was in progress and seeing the board – well, I'll call it the leader board – in the Sheraton Marlborough Hotel, and it was no contest all the way. And we were delighted to see that the two Saskatchewan rinks after, the minister said, a distressing tendency for the championships to reside elsewhere, to see these two rinks do Saskatchewan proud, as they have done.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## **ORAL QUESTIONS**

### **Teachers' Strike at Moose Jaw**

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Premier and my question, Mr. Premier, deals with the strike in the Moose Jaw separate school system, and the fact that some 1,500 students in Moose Jaw are without educational services for a second day.

I want to ask the Premier: can you indicate, and can you, in fact, confirm that absolutely no negotiations have been taking place since the strike action began and that, in fact, the Moose Jaw separate school board has now decided, rather than negotiations, to take this matter to the courts in an attempt to further delay a negotiated settlement?

I want to ask the Premier: can you advise us if that is the present situation in the Moose Jaw separate school dispute?

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, there have been no negotiations between both parties in the last 24 hours or 30 hours. It is, from my information, the hon. member is correct, that the school board has decided to take the action before the court.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — A further question to the Premier, a supplement. I'd like to ask the Premier to advise the House whether the Minister of Education, or her officials, have held discussions in the past 24 hours with the Moose Jaw Separate School Board, and/or the negotiating team for the teachers, to see if, in fact, they could be encouraged to get back to the bargaining table where, ultimately, this matter should be settled.

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, the minister has been in discussion with members of both sides of the dispute, including the parents, and is meeting today (or, in fact, right now) with the officials, and I understand will be meeting with other people. So the answer is yes, she has been meeting, or at least in discussion, with people from all sides.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — I wonder if the Premier could, as a further supplement, Mr. Speaker, if the Premier would be good enough to give us an update as to what negotiations have taken place, and whether there is any likelihood of the two parties, in his view, getting back to the tables at this time.

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's my role to interpret the discussions that are going on between the two parties. I certainly wouldn't want to comment to the effect that it might jeopardize how one party may feel about another. It is local. The minister is in touch with people on both sides. She is certainly much more familiar with the intimate details of people's views on both sides, and I am confident in her capacity to deal with it.

### **Lock-out Notices to Dairy Workers**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. My question deals with the lock-out notices reportedly issued yesterday to Saskatchewan's 750 dairy workers.

The workers had announced that, should their negotiations with the dairies break down, they would launch what they termed as "selective strikes." And, as I understood it, these work stoppages would make sure that no milk would have to be dumped by Saskatchewan farmers, and no consumers would be without milk.

But yesterday the employers have escalated the dispute by threatening to lock all dairy workers across the province, effective on Sunday. And that will mean that farmers and consumers will be quickly drawn into the dispute.

My question to the minister is this: has he contacted the employers to indicate that his government does not appreciate the lock-out decision which can have the effect only of escalating the dispute, and drawing farmers and consumers into a dispute which ought properly to concern the employer and the employees?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Mr. Speaker, what may or may happen by Saturday midnight at this point in time is largely hypothetical. There has been notice given for strike. There has been notice given for lock-outs. My hope would be that the collective bargaining process and the negotiations as part of that would, in fact, be restarted so that that issue does not, in fact, become reality.

As the member opposite may know, negotiations broke down last week. A strike notice was served, and because of the efforts of the Minister of Labour offering up a conciliator, talks were restarted. Give that, in fact, the last notices came down with a week interval between the

April 3, 1984

notice, and, in fact, the lock-out or strike action time frame, I would suggest that it seems to me that that window was there for continued negotiations, and we would be hopeful that those negotiations would take place. My understanding is that the Minister of Labour is working feverishly to see that those negotiations are restarted.

I would hope that, in fact, we aren't dealing with either a strike or lock-out situation and, in fact, these negotiations would solve either one of those problems from becoming a reality.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister indicate whether or not he feels that the lock-out notice improves the bargaining climate or harms the bargaining climate and, in fact, are we farther away from a settlement than we were 48 hours ago?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — If, in fact, it comes to a situation where we have either a strike or a lock-out, the dairy farmers of Saskatchewan nor the public will be winners. I don't think either one of them is in the best interests of either of those two groups.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Press reports indicate that the employers have indicated that they may not be available for negotiations this Thursday with the conciliator who has been provided by the Minister of Labour. Will the minister, or one of his colleagues, make clear to the employers in no uncertain terms, and to the unions representing the employees in no uncertain terms, that you expect that all will be fully represented to meet with the conciliator who has been appointed by the Minister of Labour?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — I don't need to speak for the Minister of Labour, but I think I can assure you and this House that if he wishes to, he can probably assure you as well from his seat, that the Minister of Labour has worked – and with some success in the past – and continues to work feverishly to see that negotiations and/or conciliation do, in fact, occur before any of those strikes or lock-outs become reality.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. We are dealing here with an employer who indicates that he doesn't think he can bother to meet with the conciliator appointed by the Minister of Labour. My question to you is this: are you going to accept that manner of conduct from the employer in this case, or are you going to indicate to them that you expect both parties to meet with the conciliator, so that consumers and farmers are not drawn into this dispute?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — As the hon. member well knows, negotiating processes are very dynamic, and things change minute by minute, literally, and I have no indication . . . My latest indication is that everything is being done to bring both parties together again. And I have, as well, no knowledge that both parties won't be at negotiations if, in fact, they are called.

### **Moratorium on Farm Debts**

**MR. ENGEL:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture, and my question deals with Bill 30. Last day I asked you whether you would support it, and you didn't know because you hadn't seen the bill. You've seen this bill now that is going to do a 19-month moratorium . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please! A bill that is on the order paper and before the House – questions should not be raised about that bill during question period.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question as to whether this government supports the principle of a moratorium for farm debts. That is my question. Will you support the principle?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Mr. Speaker, in so far as the member's question, relative to moratoriums is legislation which is on the order paper, and, in fact, I'm not prepared to comment on today, and, in fact, I won't comment on until I've had a chance to look at it in some detail.

I'll tell you what I am in favour of. I'm in favour of a government, such as this government, that, in fact, does something more than just talk about what it's going to do for farmers. It, in fact, acts for farmers, and I can go through the numerous things, not only in previous budgets, but in this budget, that have, in fact, reduced farmers' input costs, increased their profitability, providing a safety net for all the farmers of Saskatchewan, and in fact, to the benefit of all the people of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Agriculture is this: you said things change from moment to moment. That is the case. You say you have a program in place that might help farmers down the road this year. What about the farmers that are facing bankruptcy now? Will you do something for these people that will give your program a chance to come into effect? Will you pass this? Will you support this kind of a proposal that will give the farmers an opportunity to try and see if your programs are going to work for them?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Mr. Speaker, we recognize that some viable farms may well, in fact, be in jeopardy out there, and that is why we acted rather than just talked. We, in fact, have earmarked \$4 million in this last budget to make sure that viable farms are not jeopardized.

As I said in my remarks the other day on the budget speech, I could have, as Minister of Agriculture, I could have pointed to statistics that would suggest in Saskatchewan all is well. Bankruptcies are lower here than in other western Canadian provinces. The number of farmers in financial difficulty here are less than in others.

We read the reports of the agriculture outlook conference. It suggests Saskatchewan, unlike Manitoba, and unlike Alberta farmers, can expect a better net realized farm income. I could point to those statistics and say, "All is well." But I didn't. We, in fact, have acknowledged what the farmers out there have been telling us — that there is some farm hurt out there, and because of that we have put a \$4 million fund in place, government funded, but farmer operated.

So farmers, in fact, will be making decisions on how farmers in Saskatchewan should be helped if, in fact, their farms are in jeopardy. Now what better program than that, I ask the hon. member.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. Do you believe your program is going to work, or don't you? Will support a moratorium? Will you support a moratorium on foreclosures to see if your program is going to work? That's the simple question. If you don't support the moratorium, you don't believe your programs are going to work. So my question is simple: do you believe your programs are going to work?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe our program will work. I have faith in the farmers of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### Fuel Rebate Program

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture. He will well know that his is the government that took away the advantage of purple gas from the farmers of Saskatchewan. And my question to you is . . . and my question to you is . . . Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Agriculture is this: do you, the Minister of Agriculture, who took away the advantage of purple gas, agree with the principle of putting into place a fuel rebate program similar to the one in existence in Alberta, which would pay back 32 cents a gallon to the

April 3, 1984

farmers of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Mr. Speaker, I've already read into the record in debate in this House the NDP's position on gas rebates — what the minister of agriculture of the day when they were still government, said, "No, we do not intend to bring that program back in place." It seemed to follow elections anyways.

But more importantly, this issue — the issue of farm input costs — is important enough that we don't need this kind of partisan politics, and the farmers of Saskatchewan . . . And the farmers of Saskatchewan don't need to see their members of the legislature squabbling about. What they need to see is members doing something about it, and, in fact, that's what these government members have done. That's what all the agricultural caucus members — Tory agricultural caucus members — from across western Canada, have done.

They met in Regina here, in fact, a couple of three weeks ago, and pressed the federal government to remove their onerous fuel taxes from farm fuels. The same federal government, I might remind the hon. member, that five NDP members from Saskatchewan voted into power — voted into power — that, once again, we're trying to do something for Saskatchewan farmers, not just talk about it.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplement to the minister. As he will well know, the cost of diesel fuel for the tractor this spring, as opposed to when he took over, is 40 cents a gallon more.

I would ask him: in light of the fact that Saskatchewan farmers are, in fact, competing with Alberta farmers who have a 32 cent a gallon rebate, would you not consider, and implement, a program to pay the farmers of Saskatchewan 32 cents a gallon, especially at a time when, by your own admission, the oil industry is booming, we're producing oil in this province, and won't you share some of that with the farmers of Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Mr. Speaker, I only have to remind, not only the members of this House, but all the farmers of Saskatchewan, what government took the fuel tax rebate away in Saskatchewan. Who was it? It was those fellows that are now in opposition.

But, more importantly, Mr. Speaker, we could have, as a government, put in a farm fuel rebate. We could have. But, in fact, it seems to us that the common sense move there would be to get the federal government to take the taxes off the farm fuels.

And the reason I came to that conclusion, Mr. Speaker, is you only have to look at the farm cost production that was in place, that these members, in fact, had in place when they were part of government. And you've only got to look at the kinds of numbers that it paid out, to see that, in fact, it wasn't meaningful, and certainly, in any given fiscal year, it never, ever came near to matching the pay-out that removing the school taxes on the . . . (inaudible) . . . quarter in this province will do — \$11 million in assistance, opposed to anything that was paid out under your administration.

### **Removal of Ag Rep Office from Kamsack**

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, on March 1 you moved an ag rep office from Kamsack, and district 18. The Kamsack district is now going to be served out of the ag rep's office in Canora, out of district 19.

You received, a few days ago, a letter from the local agricultural extension board, and they have stated their opposition to that decision of yours, because you had not consulted with them, or with the farmers in their area, when you made your decision.

And my question is: Mr. Minister, now that you have made that decision, and some farmers in the area are going to be from 85 to 90 miles away from the ag rep's office, how is that going to improve the service that those farmers receive?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — First of all, Mr. Speaker, to answer the one question about whether we have or have not consulted with the people up there, I would presume, and I would hope, that the member would know (because I am sure he would not want to mislead the House) that, in fact, my deputy minister was up there just this past week, and met with them. I'm sure you wouldn't want to leave any other impression than that and, as it relates to delivering extension services or the transfer of technology from behind the research counter, if you like, to the farm gate.

I would like to suggest to the hon. member that, for the first time in this province, probably, ag reps and the farmers that they serve have probably, for the first time in this province in a good many years, their acknowledgement of the role that they can perform for the first time ever, has been just that — acknowledged, in that not only are the ag reps out there, but they're working in conjunction with agronomists from chemical companies, from banks, from fertilizers, as part of a total professional team out there.

As well, we've attempted to bring them into the 20th century and provide them with the modern tools, so much a part of today's extension and communication process. And the one that comes to mind, right off the top of my hat, is providing them microcomputers; thirdly, Agritex; fourthly, communications via satellite to farm groups — all of those tools that bring farm technology to the farmers most efficiently and most effectively.

And a final point, in so far as servicing those farmers up there, it will be a two-man office operating out of Canora, and there seems to be some great benefit to operating two-man offices, serving districts. And I would suspect that the members opposite would understand that that would increase the chances for one ag rep to be in the office, so, when a farmer came in from wherever in the district, he's got a chance of talking to one of the ag reps, at least, at that point in time.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, is it not true, however, that you did not consult with the farmers or the district agriculture extension boards or with any of the ag reps in the area, that you were going to close down the ag reps' office in Kamsack, and that you were going to be serving that district out of the Canora area, out of a different district? Is that not true, that you did that without any consultation until last Friday, I believe it was, when your deputy minister finally met with the two local boards, and they told you exactly what they felt — that they were not getting agreement with your decision?

So, Mr. Minister, do you not agree, as you stated last fall when we were talking about the Wilkie situation, and I'll quote what you said then:

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

How, Mr. Minister, are you going to serve the farmers a lot better by moving the office right out of district 18, putting into district 19, and still saying, as you said four months ago, that it was better to have it in the centre of the district? And now you seem to have changed your mind, and you are saying that it's better to have it right out of the district altogether.

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Mr. Speaker, number one, my deputy has met. Number two, the

April 3, 1984

locations of ag rep offices are, at least with this administration, not political decisions. They're based on sound administrative decisions to provide the best service for the greatest number of farmers at any given moment.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — New question to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, now that there is supposedly an ag rep office in Canora (but they haven't got an ag rep yet), and we have no office in district 18 in Kamsack (but we apparently do have an ag rep that's supposed to be looking after that district), would you not consider putting the new ag rep, that you say you are going to be putting into Canora, into Kamsack where there is an office that's there on a long-term lease, and will be there? Would you not consider putting that new ag rep into the district, into Kamsack, so he can service district 18, and leave the ag rep that has been in Canora for the last 33 years to remain in that Canora office and serve district 19?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — We are interested in, as I said just one moment ago, providing the best service to the most farmers. And it seems like there is some efficiency by having two-man offices where it makes good sense, and this is one of these.

For example . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . the hon. member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg will know that Assiniboia is a two-man office. And how long has it been a two-man office, Hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg? And why are you not on your feet telling us about how awful that office is? Why? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, who did? Oh, you mean . . . Oh, I see — two sets of rules. The proverbial double standard. I rest my case.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — New question to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, am I to understand that what you are saying is that you are going to be centralizing these agricultural services in Saskatchewan, and that you are going to be closing down offices in certain areas, and moving ag reps into different areas, and possibly doing away with some ag reps altogether. Are you saying that that is what your policy is? Do you have a long-term policy that agricultural extension boards would be aware of, that they would know just what it is that you are proposing for the people of Saskatchewan, the farmers of Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Our policy is to give the farmers of Saskatchewan the best possible service in terms of extension services. And I'm just going to repeat very quickly, if the hon. member would listen, what those things are today. Those things are some of the new communication devices — microcomputers, data bases, Argitex, satellite programs that have been beamed into groups of farmers to bring them into the 20th century. That's the kind of policy and the kind of goal that we're pursuing, giving them the latest technology in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

And consistent with effectiveness, from this side of the government, I also have just been handed a note to pass along and advise the House that, in fact, negotiations will resume at 2 p.m. on Thursday, between the dairy producers and the union members, with Cliff Hagen as conciliator.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## CONDOLENCES

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

That this Assembly records, with sorrow and regret, the passing of an officer of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan.

**A.R. Ponto**, who died on April 1, 1984, at the age of 79, served as Sergeant-at-Arms of the Leader of the Opposition, from 1963 to 1965 and from 1971 to 1981.



Born on a farm near Elkwood, North Dakota, he moved to the Hardy district in Saskatchewan with his family in 1911. He farmed in that area for a time, and then worked for a magazine circulation agency before establishing in the Armed Forces in 1942.

He served in Britain in 1944 to '45, and subsequently battled tuberculosis in the Fort San sanatorium for seven years. He was an active member of the Tuberculosis Veteran's Section of the Royal Canadian Legion, serving as an officer of the national body several times. He was also a member of the Army and Navy Veterans' Association in the city of Regina.

I know my colleagues wish to remember Mr. Ponto. Certainly the member of Moosomin will be adding his condolences.

At this time the legislature avails itself of this opportunity to record its tribute of respect to a former officer of the Assembly.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to add my words of condolence to those of the Premier on the passing of Archie Ponto. Archie served this legislature for 12 years or so as Sergeant-at-Arms, and he served with distinction. Prior to that he had had a distinguished war record. He was, as the Premier has indicated, active in the Royal Canadian Legion; and, I believe, at one time was president of the Tubercular Veterans' Association of Canada. He had a long bout with tuberculosis, and conquered that disease, and was able to carry on a full life.

He served in this legislature with great good humour, was very well regarded by all the members who served with him. He was a good citizen of this city. I had occasion to know him because he had a cottage close to mine at the beach, and he was a person who had many friends in the circle of the Royal Canadian Legion and in veterans' circles, and outside that circle. His passing will be regretted by many people, and I pass on to Mrs. Ponto and the family the condolences of members on this side of the House.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise, of course, in support of the motion moved by the Premier, and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. And in paying tribute to the late Archie Ponto I suggest it may be said of him that his life was dedicated to the service of his nation and the parliamentary system. His life may have seemed like a moment in eternity, but for 79 good years Archie Ponto was a respected and revered member of the community.

At a time like this it is sometime easy to bestow glowing tributes to the deceased, but in the case of Archie Ponto I know that I cannot exaggerate the fine qualities of this man.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of this Assembly since 1975, I came to know Archie Ponto in his capacity as Sergeant-at-Arms of this Legislative Assembly. He served his nation in time of war, overseas in Britain, and was an active member of the Royal Canadian Legion. Archie Ponto was a patriotic Canadian.

Subsequently, he was called on to serve as Sergeant-at-Arms of the Legislative Assembly from 1963 to 1965, and from 1971 to 1981. He upheld the historic traditions of the British parliamentary system when he served as an officer of this Assembly. And I know all members who knew him well will concur with my belief that Archie Ponto was a distinguished Canadian, a patriot, and a good citizen.

Archie Ponto is no longer with us, but his reputation will live on. He was a good and decent man, and to his family I wish to extend my personal condolences, and to put on the record of this legislature that this Assembly has lost a friend. And it can be said with certainty that Archie Ponto's life and career made Saskatchewan a better place. And, having said that, Mr. Speaker, I

April 3, 1984

hope all members of this Assembly will reflect for a moment on the life of the late Archie Ponto, a distinguished Canadian.

Motion agreed to.

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

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

Motion agreed to.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **MOTION UNDER RULE 16**

**MR. PETERSEN:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving the motion under rule 16.

Mr. Speaker, in recent days, during the debate on the budget, and also as we have noted today in question period, the opposition has accused the Government of Saskatchewan of doing nothing to help farmers. They've also stated that the government has not been aggressive enough in pressuring the federal Liberal government to assist farmers as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these allegations amount to nothing, absolutely nothing, except more and more of what the rest of the opposition's misguided mental meanderings add up to, and that's fiction, fantasy and fertilizer — the three F's.

If the opposition, Mr. Speaker, would take the time to read what was in the budget . . . I presume they can read. If they would take the time to read what was in the budget, Mr. Speaker, rather than simply accepting the interpretations of their illustrious leader and his amateur theatrics, they wouldn't say those things. If they took the time to talk to farmers and farm groups, as we do, Mr. Speaker, they wouldn't be able to say those things. If they took the time to take their eyes out of their collective crying towels and read the papers, Mr. Speaker, they would not suffer from these delusions.

I'd just like to show you what I mean.

They say that the provincial government has not called for action from the federal government. Well, Mr. Speaker, the *Leader-Post*, Saturday, March 10 — "Cost-price squeeze seen as most pressing farm issue is the headline, and the leading sentence is:

Progressive Conservative farm caucuses from across the . . . (inaudible) . . . repeated long-time requests Friday for removal of federal taxes on fuel, and a pay-out from the western grain stabilization fund.

From the *Times*, headlines read: "PC MLAs want federal action." Those are just a couple of examples, Mr. Speaker.

But we do more, Mr. Speaker, than simply get down on our knees and beg the federal government for some assistance for some programs. We do more than that. We initiate our own programs. We initiate our own actions. We stand on our own two feet.

We have an agricultural budget with a 20 per cent increase, which includes, Mr. Speaker, \$4 million set aside for the counselling and assistance for farmers. This program would provide

management counselling, counselling in the restructuring of loans and, perhaps, guaranteeing operating loans for farmers.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is a good program. It's a new idea. I would like to challenge the federal government to come up with an equal amount, or a double amount, or 100 times the amount that the provinces put up. I'd like to challenge them to at least equal what we have put up to help farmers who are caught in the cost-price squeeze.

But what have they done? Virtually nothing.

Mr. Speaker, we have ourselves initiated tax relief programs in this province – good tax relief programs. We've removed the school tax from the home quarter — \$11 million in the pockets of the farmers of Saskatchewan. And the opposition cries, "Oh, nothing, nothing. It's not worth anything. No good."

Mr. Speaker, that's better than all the pre-election fuel rebates that they initiated in the years when they were in power. You remember those, Mr. Speaker. A year or so before the election – bang! We'd have a fuel rebate. Wow! Wonderful! A little bit later, after the election was over, and they'd bought their way into power again – bang! They'd pull it.

They were the people who removed that fuel rebate. They were the people – not us. We bring in programs to help farmers, Mr. Speaker. And no one can fail to notice the removal of gas tax, which was our first act when we came into power. That single tax removal, Mr. Speaker, saved R.M.s thousands and thousands of dollars; school units thousands and thousands of dollars.

And the farmers of this province liked us for that. Their cultivator shovels, and their bins, and their other tools, and small hardware, clothes, everything that came into their towns on trucks, had to have tax charged against it by the retailers. They don't understand simple economics, Mr. Speaker, obviously. And that is that a retailer will pass his cost along to the consumers. And who are the consumers of those products? The farmers of our province. So who paid the tax? The farmers of our province. We removed that, and they no longer have to pay that tax.

This government, this Progressive Conservative government, has consistently led the country in new and innovative ideas which have enhanced the agricultural sector. And you can't deny that. You cannot deny that at all.

What has the federal Liberal government done? The federal Liberal government, Mr. Speaker, has done nothing. And let's not forget that that federal Liberal government was put in there by the help, and with the help of the members opposite – with their brethren, with their federal brethren. The federal NDP and the provincial NDP, together made sure we had a Liberal government in Ottawa today. They won't do it again. They won't do it again.

That federal Liberal government, Mr. Speaker, has done absolutely nothing except to make a few vague statements about what they would do for us out here. And I'd like to quote from the *Leader-Post*, January 7, 1984:

Grain stabilization plan said in need of change.

Wheat Board Minister Hazen Argue said last October he wants the program's legislation changed as soon as possible (get that, MR. Speaker, as soon as possible) to provide a long-awaited payout from nearly \$1 billion accumulated in the plan's fund (nearly \$1 billion in that fund).

Senator Argue has said the payment is needed in 1984 to help prairie grain farmers squeezed between low prices and high costs.

April 3, 1984

Even Senator Argue realizes it – amazing!

The interesting thing, Mr. Speaker, it's April now. That was last October. Farmers need the money to put the crop in the ground this spring. It's going to be growing in the ground in two to three weeks. We don't need it two weeks before the next federal election. We need it now. And they aren't doing anything, Mr. Speaker. They aren't doing anything. All we get is vague statements.

I'd like to quote from the *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, Monday, April 2, 1984. The heading reads, "PC candidate praises promise of fuel tax cut":

Gord Dobrowolsky's federal campaign was given a lift Saturday night when former prime minister Joe Clark told 400 Humboldt and area farmers that a Tory government would remove the federal tax on farm fuel.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there it is, Mr. Speaker. There it is, Mr. Speaker. As you have noticed, Conservative governments live up to their promises. The federal Conservative government, when it comes into power after the next election, will live up to that promise too. Make no mistake about it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to get back to the Western Grains Stabilization Fund and some of the reasons for why it was introduced. And I'd like to quote from the *Western Grain Stabilization Handbook*, which was printed in 1979. One of the headings is:

Why a stabilization program was introduced. Grain growing in western Canada has always been uncertain.

Well amazing, Mr. Speaker, they've realized that. They go on to talk about drought and depression in the '40s, the '50s, and talk about cycles. Then they go on to say:

The Western Grains Stabilization Program is based on cash flow calculations. Cash flow, for the purposes of the program, is the difference between overall cash receipts for western grain and the overall related costs of producing it. Reduced cash flow can result from a fall in prices, low sales resulting from poor yields, a slump in world demand, inability to move grain through the elevator system, and rising production costs – or a combination of these factors.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd say that we've suffered at least four out of those five in the last couple of years, and we still don't have a pay-out. We still don't have a pay-out.

Mr. Speaker, I'd have to say that that program is a total flop unless it was designed to simply generate money into the federal coffers. If that was the purpose behind it, then it's a success, because, Mr. Speaker, there's almost \$1 billion there, and a third of that is farmers' money, western Canadian farmers' money. Not farmers from Ontario, western Canadian farmers' money.

Now it's an amazing thing, Mr. Speaker, but people who grew corn and specialty crops in Ontario last year, and paid absolutely nothing into a stabilization program, received a stabilization program this past year. They paid nothing in, and yet they receive a payment. Here we sit with the Western Grains Stabilization Fund with a billion dollars in it, and we get nothing. It makes no sense to me, Mr. Speaker. There's a double standard somewhere.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what has this province done to promote the idea of co-operation in the western provinces? The provincial Tory agricultural caucuses from Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba met and discussed the future of agriculture and some common concerns and problems that our farmers face. To my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that anything like that has been done – the first time.

The former minister of agriculture, under the previous administration, didn't go into consultation with other provinces. He went on a road show out in the province of Saskatchewan to garner up votes for the next election. We don't do that, Mr. Speaker. We don't sell ourselves for votes. We put in programs that farmers need. We engage in consultation with other provinces trying to identify common causes, common problems, common concerns.

It's only by working together, united, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to make ourselves heard by Ottawa. Together, we'll be able to do it, Mr. Speaker. Divide and conquer was always the Liberal government's motto, and it continues to be so. We, as Progressive Conservatives, recognize that, Mr. Speaker. We recognize that. They can't fool us, and we plan to work together to make ourselves heard.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I would like to move the following motion:

That in the opinion of this Assembly, the strength of Canada comes from a strong agricultural family farm base which must be enhanced and preserved, and this Assembly urges the federal government to make a payment immediately from the farmer supported Western Grain Stabilization Fund and abolish the federal tax on farm fuels, which would provide the timely cash injection so important to the farm economy as they prepare for spring seeding.

And it's seconded by the hon. member for Shellbrook-Torch River.

Thank you.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion introduced by the member for Kelvington-Wadena provides a welcome opportunity for me, and for our caucus, to discuss the problems facing agriculture and the family farm.

This motion starts out with a statement concerning the role of the family farm in Canada, and nobody – nobody, Mr. Speaker – will disagree with his contention. This statement is then followed by two proposals, both directed at the federal government, that also sound good. One asks for a pay-out from the Western Grain Stabilization Fund, and the other one asks for the abolition of the federal tax on farm fuels. Both are reasonable propositions that would benefit farmers and take some of the pressure off of them.

But somehow, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't quite add up. Why would the Tory back-benchers start pressing on only these two narrow items? Even though they are of benefit, they certainly won't solve farm policies, so consequently, at the end of my remarks today, I intend to move an amendment to this motion, Mr. Speaker.

I don't have to think about the matter very long before I figured out why the PC members are pressing on this narrow issue. The Progressive Conservative members are trying to divert attention away from the failure of their own provincial government to help farmers, by putting pressure on the federal government on a couple of quick and easy proposals. I don't mind them putting the heat on the federal Liberal government. I am with you all the way on that one. As a matter of fact, they didn't go far enough. They didn't go far enough. But I certainly am not going to let them off the hook – the members opposite off the hook – for the failure to do something dramatic, and something that will help the provincial farmers.

Earlier, Mr. Speaker, I made the case in this House that the province now has the economic strength to do something meaningful to help farmers during the budget debate. The province also has certain areas of activity within its jurisdiction for action. Thus, the solution to the farm problems before us is most likely to be found in a package of programs involving both the federal, as they suggest today, but they also need to involve some provincial initiatives.

The two proposals contained in this motion will help farmers, some, in their spring operations I agree, that is, if they haven't lost their farm, and if their banker is still willing to extend some credit. But any farmer knows you have to think further ahead than just your spring seeding. You need money to take the crop off. It seems that the PC members are pretty free and easy in spending federal money, but they are pretty tight-fisted when it comes to dealing with the provincial money.

Thus I have to conclude, Mr. Speaker, that this motion only begins to tackle the question it raises, and much, much more is needed to make it an adequate program and an adequate solution. There can be no question about the pay-out from the Western Grains Stabilization Fund and I am sure it's useful, and it will be justified.

I might remind members opposite, that this stabilization plan was one of the things that the NDP squeezed out of a reluctant Liberal government during those minority years of '72 to '74. Pay-outs have been made, but it is clear that both the formula for pay-outs, and the timing of these pay-outs need to be re-examined. The member for Kelvington-Wadena said, "We do more. We initiate our own programs." And then he referred to one small item that I thought was very, very interesting: Joe Clark would remove the tax on farm fuel. Well, let me tell this House if Joe Clark would, he'd start with removing that millionaire from Montreal first so he could be back in the driver's seat to do something I put no credit, and I'm not going to shake a promise at my banker saying that Joe Clark is going to get me some money, because that isn't a very good guarantee. That isn't a very good guarantee . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Sure, I like Joe Clark. The trouble is your party doesn't like him. The trouble is your party put him in the back seat when he could have been in the driver's seat. 57 per cent of the support, and they dump him. Provincial PC members are very generous suggesting that the federal tax on farm fuel will be eliminated, and we can agree. But I notice, Mr. Speaker, they aren't very generous when it comes to advocating a provincial farm fuel rebate. They are very, very tight-fisted when it comes to provincial money.

Is it so tough, is it so tough for you to put your money where your mouth is? So, maybe we should give them a chance to back up what they are saying. Maybe we should give them a chance to set some standards or set some examples for the federal government.

Other provincial action is needed, as well, if measures taken by the federal government are to bear full fruit. In particular, Mr. Speaker, legislation is needed now to prevent farm foreclosures and seizures. Every day we wait, another farmer is in jeopardy. I have a bill on the order paper on this matter. That, of course, will have to be debated later on. But that type of action complements measures that are advocated in this resolution today.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the extra cash farmers get from the measures advocated in this motion still won't put the crop in. It still won't pay off the old bills. It still won't carry the farmer through the summer. That is why an operating loan guarantee program is needed as part of the package.

The motion before us, of course, only deals with two items on which the federal government should take action. Prices for 1984-85 are a critical concern for many. Hazen Argue suggested that there could be a sizeable drop in the initial grain price in the coming crop year. There's not much point in getting the money to put in a crop if we're going to take a licking when it comes to the harvest.

Further price drops will put farmers well below the cost of production. The initial price is, in fact, the federal price guarantee, and the only guarantee the grain farmer has; if the initial price drops, the guarantee is gone.

The two-price system for wheat is another area where action taken can help ensure the farmers get some return for the investment he makes in his crop, using the cash this motion proposes to

free up. The two-price system was advocated for years by farm organizations to help raise their income. When it was finally introduced, it was just then that the world wheat prices sky-rocketed and, consequently, it became more protection for the consumer than the farmer.

For some time the price range for wheat used for human consumption domestically has been in the area of international prices - \$5 to \$7. Now is the time for the producer to get a break, Mr. Speaker, by increasing the price of wheat used locally and domestically for human consumption.

For the reasons outlined, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to move this following resolution, seconded by my colleague:

That the following words be added to the motion:

and this Assembly further urges the federal government to take steps to maintain initial grain prices in the '84-85 at a minimum of the current level, and to increase substantially the price of wheat used domestically for human consumption under the two-price system.

And this Assembly also urges the provincial government to take steps to help the family farm by: (1) supporting legislation to prevent farm foreclosures and seizures; (2) introducing a farm operating loan guarantee program; and (3) introducing a farm fuel rebate program.

I so move.

The debate continues concurrent.

**MR. MULLER:** — Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in this debate, I wish to state that I really do believe that the Liberal government is not receptive to the needs of the farmers in western Canada, and Saskatchewan, in particular. Allow me to cite some examples to back up my statement.

The Liberal government of Ottawa introduced — perhaps I should state that differently — they forced us, yes, they forced the metric system on farmers. The same Liberal government was headed by a man who will go down in history as one of the most arrogant leaders Canada has ever had. And you know that he said to the western grain farmers, in a time of crisis? He said, "You sell your own wheat." And this was the same Liberal government that promised to double track the railroads in western Canada; instead they doubled-crossed the farmers of this region.

Mr. Speaker, for the record I should point out it was the NDP federal members from Saskatchewan who voted to defeat the Conservative government in 1979, the first . . . (inaudible) . . . the Saskatchewan farmer had since the Diefenbaker government. And they are part and parcel of why we have a government in Ottawa that does not care about the needs of Saskatchewan farmers.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative farm caucus from across the prairies met here in Regina — MLAs from Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. And in this two-day meeting it was agreed that we would call upon the Government of Ottawa to remove the federal tax on fuel, and to issue a pay-out from the Western Grain Stabilization Fund. The cost-price squeeze is still the most pressing issue facing farmers. This message was sent to Eugene Whelan, the show-biz Minister of Agriculture in Ottawa. The message fell on deaf ears, Mr. Speaker, the removal of the federal tax on fuels is a long-standing request from Saskatchewan. That move would save Canada farmers \$150 million, based on figures that show farmers use about 1.5 billion litres of diesel fuel a year, and pay about 10.2 cents per litre of federal tax.

We all know what the removal of the 20 per cent NDP sliding gas tax did for the Saskatchewan

April 3, 1984

economy. It was absolutely amazing, Mr. Speaker, and was the largest tax cut in the history of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine the positive effect that such a move would have on the agricultural sector? Allow me to quote from an article that was in the *Western Producer*, and dated February 16, 1984. The headline read: Group wants tax on farm fuel removed. It went on to say, and I quote:

It isn't very often that Palliser Wheat Growers Association and the National Farmers Union find themselves in agreement.

Allow me to interject here, Mr. Speaker – and nor, for that matter, the Progressives and the National Farmers Union.

In any case, the article went on to say:

Both organizations were lobbying for the removal of federal taxes on farm fuel, which account for 30 per cent of the price paid by prairie farmers for gasoline and diesel.

Mr. Speaker, they, too, found that the Liberal government in Ottawa is not listening. This move would result in immediate savings of approximately \$1,000 for an 1,100 to 1,200-acres farm by cutting these taxes. Simply stated, we must pressure Ottawa to remove the tax on fuel.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch on the subject of the western Canada stabilization fund. There's \$870 million in the fund, one-third from the farmers of western Canada. Time and time again, the Progressive Conservative federal members and provincial MLAs have made the recommendation to shorten the term from five years to three years, so to trigger a pay-out.

Allow me to quote from the House of Commons debate question period on April 29, 1983. Mr. Charles Mayer, PC member of parliament from Portage, Manitoba, in asking Jean-Luc Pepin a question requesting an early pay-out, and Pepin gives him a standard Liberal answer.

Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I'd like to quote from the federal *Hansard*:

Madam Speaker, I would like to direct a further supplementary question to the Minister of Transport who is responsible for the Western Grain Stabilization Act. Would the minister be prepared to look at amending the act so that the stabilization period would go from five years to three years? In effect, that would trigger a pay-out in this crop year, almost immediately, or as quickly as the arithmetic could be done, of something like \$150 million that would not put the fund in jeopardy. The fund currently sits with an excess of 600 million in it. With the current rate of contributions, at the end of 1983 it will have approximately 800 million. This is a case where there is some farmers' money and some government contribution. If the government were willing to look at the act to see if we could go from five years to three years, it would trigger a pay-out in western Canada of \$150 million.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is the example of the PC commitment to the farmers of western Canada. Allow me to quote what Mr. Pepin's answer to the question was. Mr. Pepin said:

Madam Speaker, as far as I'm concerned, he could have gone on all day. When Western Grain Stabilization Act was passed, we witnessed a debate on the same question as the one raised today, whether it was to be three years or five years. The decision was made at that time that five years was the better base because it co-ordinated better with the pieces of legislation in the Canadian system. Obviously the debate has gone on, and obviously each time farmers run into some kind of difficulty somebody rises and asks: why not the three years? The answer is the same as the one given when the bill was introduced in the first place. I'm told that this,



nevertheless, is an idea which is constantly reviewed by the government, and that there is review of this issue at the particular time being undertaken by the people in the Department of Agriculture.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is a classic example of the typical Ottawa Liberal attitude to our farmers. Headline in the Regina *Leader-Post* dated January 7, 1984 read:

Grain stabilization plan said in need of change.

Of course it is, Mr. Speaker. The same article went on to say:

Federal officials are still scratching their heads trying to figure out how to give western farmers some quick help from the bulging Western Grain Stabilization Plan.

Well, the boys in Ottawa must be still scratching their heads, Mr. Speaker, because no help is forthcoming to the farmers. There is nearly a billion dollars in the fund. Senator Foghorn, I mean Senator Hazen Argue, talks about getting help, but does it ever happen? Of course not, Mr. Len Gustafson, the wheat board critic for the PC opposition in the House of Commons has said:

The plans need major revision. What is needed is something that will relate to the cost of production.

Mr. Speaker, during the hard economic times caused by the voodoo fiscal policy of the Ottawa crowd, they have not initiated one positive program for the farmers. One leading agricultural spokesman has gone on record as suggesting that maybe the federal Liberals will wait till the next election campaign to announce measures for the farmers. Mr. Speaker, by then it will be too little and, furthermore, will be a little too late.

Every farmer recognizes and supports the positive efforts of the present Government of Saskatchewan when it comes to measures for agriculture. Farmers know we held true to our word when we brought forth the Farm Purchase Program involving \$255 million in loans. This program has been so successful in helping young farmers own their farms that in the first 10 weeks more farmers bought land than in the whole 10 years of the NDP land bank.

The rural gasification has reached over 3,000 customers. In the most recent budget, Mr. Speaker, it was announced that, amongst other things, that this government would eliminate the school property tax on the home quarter, and I'm proud that our government is led by a professional economist, and the only premier in Canada who has a Canadian Wheat Board permit book. He knows about farmers and agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, we also recognize that there are certain agricultural policies are not within the jurisdiction of any provincial government and yet we're firmly committed to bringing about changes in those areas. That is why we are pressuring the government in Ottawa. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the motion calling for the federal government to abolish the tax on farm fuels, and to make payment from the farmer-supported western grain stabilization fund. Both would be excellent measures to stimulate the farm economy.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SAUDER:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in this Assembly on behalf of my constituents in Nipawin and add my contribution to this discussion, and the excellent motion as proposed by the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

I believe that this motion is of great importance to Saskatchewan farmers. I believe this expression of intent is of great significance to every family in my constituency, and as such, we should examine this motion clause by clause.

April 3, 1984

It states, firstly, Mr. Speaker:

That in the opinion of this Assembly, the strength of Canada comes from a strong agricultural family farm base which must be enhanced and preserved.

This statement of opinion exemplifies the attitude of this government to the agricultural base in Saskatchewan. We have acted to strengthen the . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. State your point of order.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm on the Rules committee and on a group that decided on this debate, and rule 16(1) says: “. . . by government and opposition members alternately.”

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I think if the member will refer to page 14, rule 16(1) it says:

A motion may be moved every other Tuesday immediately following Question Period and Motions for Returns (Not Debatable) on the Orders of the Day with the topic of the debate to be chosen by Government and Opposition Members alternately.

In the circumstance that you're concerned about, I recognized the first member on his feet.

**MR. SAUDER:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This statement . . . As I was saying, this statement of opinion exemplifies the attitude of this government to the agricultural base in Saskatchewan. We have acted to strengthen the family farm, first of all, by removing the NDP's feudal system, the land bank, and replacing it with the family farm purchase program — a program that has enabled more than 1,500 family farms to remain intact, and pass from father to son or daughter.

And the Minister of Finance in his recent budget has again proven this government's commitment to the family farm concept — \$4 million to a new fund that will guarantee that every viable family farm unit remains intact during this period of low commodity prices.

Mr. Speaker, our Minister of Agriculture has recently been in contact with our federal representative in cabinet, who committed publicly that they would gladly match any commitment which we made to the farmers in the area in which I represent, in north-eastern Saskatchewan. Yet, when our minister approaches him, he suggests that they will think about it and look at it. I don't feel that he made an honest commitment to those farmers when he was out speaking to them.

We have also committed \$11 million in property tax relief to assist these farmers fighting the cost price squeeze. Mr. Speaker, I can't help but wonder at the audacity of the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg when he rose in question period last Thursday and stated his opposition to this program. He said it wouldn't help the small farmers. Well, he seems to have changed his spots since last year. Another tricky change —sleight of hand, if you will.

You see, Mr. Speaker, last year he seemed to think that the property tax rebate, which is essentially a rebate on a base portion of property taxes — much the same as this program is — was the greatest thing since sliced bread. I quote that member in *Hansard* of April 27, 1983, when he said:

The thing with the property improvement grant is that it helps the small farmer, and is a special assistance that he gets to help him and to stay in farming in this

competitive world.

Well, Mr. hon. member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, I agree with your first statement. This program will be especially helpful for the small farmer, and it will help him to stay in farming and to fight the cost price squeeze. Mr. Speaker, these measures are in direct response to the needs of the family farm operators who have asked for assistance and have received assistance from this government.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture is also responsive to the needs of the family farm. Grain farmers in my area were experiencing severe cash flow reductions because of infestations of glume blotch and the wheat midge. They told the Minister of Agriculture that something must be done, or they would suffer severe setbacks from which some family farming units might not recover.

The member for Weyburn was receptive to their plea. He understands their plight at being a permit holder himself. He knows that Saskatchewan's backbone is the family farm, and the Minister of Agriculture responded by providing \$300,000 to aid in the fight against glume blotch and the wheat midge, which have been so destructive throughout my constituency. And I believe people from all areas of Saskatchewan should be lauding the minister for this response as it is always best to attack a problem before it has a chance to spread and establish itself on a wider scale.

Members opposite pretend to support the family farm concept, Mr. Speaker, but their true colours show through. The now demised party is exactly that – demised, dead, and dying in rural Saskatchewan, because they tried to destroy that very basic concept upon which this province was founded – the basis of owning your own dirt, not being a share-cropper. They tried to buy up all the farm land for their land bank, so that young farmers would be nothing more than share-croppers.

But the people gave them a clear message in April 1982. They said, "We want no more of your family of crown corporations. We want to maintain family farms instead," Mr. Speaker – the true families in this province. And they elected a Progressive Conservative government that has done more to maintain and preserve the family farm in the last two years than the now-demised party accomplished in the 35 years previous.

Mr. Speaker, let us now analyse the second statement in this motion, and I quote:

This Assembly urges the federal government to make a payment immediately from the farmer supported Western Grains Stabilization Fund.

As Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Rural Development, I recently had the distinct pleasure to attend the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention. The only negative note that was struck on that entire convention came on the last day, on Friday morning, when the old turncoat CCF senator spoke as minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, and in his usual style, Mr. Speaker, he told those delegates of the millions, literally hundreds of millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, of the farmers' money in the stabilization fund – hundreds of millions of dollars of our farmers' money sitting in Ottawa.

And then, Mr. Speaker, he told the delegates he had a problem. He couldn't convince his Liberal colleagues to pay out the money. Mr. Speaker, do you know why? Well, I would have to surmise that they want to use it as an election give-away – playing politics with the farmers' money.

Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of a former program we had in this province, one which our opposition seems to be asking for again; some type of a cost reduction program on fuel. It seems, if we go back into the history of that, they played politics with it to a great extent. They introduced it in '74. It seems to me an election year was 1975. It continued into 1976, and then it

April 3, 1984

was dropped. Effective August 1, 1978, introduced again. It seems to me we had an election late that fall. Dropped again in 1980, Mr. Speaker, after the elections – playing politics again with the farmers' livelihood.

Yet this senator from Ottawa suggested that he couldn't get his Liberal colleagues to turn around on the grain stabilization fund. And, as if that wasn't bad enough, he also had to tell all of the more than 1,400 delegates present that he was going to drop their initial price. He had the nerve to stand there and say, "Not only am I not going to pay you're your own money, but I'm going to make sure you have less income as well."

Mr. Speaker, our farmers are in a price squeeze now, and those millions of dollars have never been more needed than they are today. This government has recognized the plight of the western farmer and has responded with a bold and innovative budget to assist Saskatchewan producers. We are simply asking that the NDP's friends in Ottawa take the same approach.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the last statement of this motion requests the federal government to remove the federal tax on farm fuels. This oppressive tax, levied on the backs of our farmers by the Trudeau-Broadbent coalition, must be removed. Last year, members opposite, and especially our closet capitalist from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, the agricultural critic, were trying to convince the people of Saskatchewan that there was a provincial tax on gasoline for farm fuels. Mr. Speaker, the people of this province knew that, minutes after this government was sworn in, they had removed the gasoline tax. We did away with this unnecessary and burdensome taxation.

Having failed again to fool the people, the now-demised party is trying to convince the electors of this province that this government should spend \$5 million or \$6 million to reinstate their old, pre-election fuel rebate gimmick. They would have us trade a good, solid tax cut of \$11 million on property taxes, which every farmer will benefit from, for an old trick they used to employ just before every election. We must ask, why?

In 1980, Mr. Speaker, there was a government in Ottawa that cared about the western farmer. There was a federal government that was prepared to listen to the concern of prairie producers. There were even cabinet ministers from Saskatchewan who were elected to the House of Commons. But what happened? The NDP members from Saskatchewan went to bed with Trudeau and Broadbent's eastern union crew and defeated that government. And these members opposite have been trying to lay down a smoke-screen to hide their shame ever since.

However, in April 1982 the people of Saskatchewan saw through that smoke-screen and chastised the provincial NDP for their errors. And in the next federal election they will similarly vent their anger upon the federal NDP, and I suggest there'll not be a single federal member elected from this province to represent that party.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to support this motion, and I urge all members to ensure that this message is transmitted to our federal representatives for their immediate consideration.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I want to join with others to indicate that a very important segment of our economy is agriculture. I want, also, to indicate that that very important sector of our economy is in serious trouble. And I would have thought that dealing with this important subject matter here today, that all of the members here would very seriously approach it and would, in fact, put aside their clichés and their cheap political shots to address the basic problems that are confronting the Saskatchewan farmers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — As I discuss with the farmers in Saskatchewan and in my constituency, one of the major problems, that they are facing is in respect to a cash flow. And the second major

problem is the high increase in the input cost versus the amount of receipts that they received for the sale of their products.

Farmers are selling in a competitive world market. And I want to say that the Tories in this House brag immensely about having the largest tax cut in the history of the province – and that's the way they term it – when they removed, really, the purple gas benefit that the farmers of the province had. And there's no doubt that that benefit of the taxes went to those who drove, the tax concession on gas, went to the truckers, to the tourists, to the interprovincial trucking firms. And I want to say that it did not go into the hands of the farmers. It doesn't go into the hands of the farmers. And I want to say that while I appreciate any major tax cut, and I'm not criticizing that that tax cut hasn't had benefits to the provincial economy – I'm not saying that — but I want to say that the people who are, in fact, gaining the benefit of that tax cut were in a position of being able to pass on their direct costs. Truckers, they could pass them on, and they could cover the cost. But I'm going to tell you that the farmers are not in the position like that. And, therefore, the primary benefit of protection has to be to the farmers who are competing on a world market.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — I want to say that what we have seen here is the opposition . . . the government, when they were opposition members, used to criticize the then New Democratic Party government. And they would say, "Why are you always blaming Ottawa?" That was the song that was sung when the members opposite sat here. And today, now, with their inept farm policies, they're trying to escape their responsibilities by trying to blame it solely on to the federal government.

But let us look at the facts. As my colleague from Shaunavon has indicated to this House — \$350 million to the big oil companies — that was the concession of this government. Let us take half of that amount and put it into the agriculture economy, and I'll tell you, you will stimulate economic activities in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — The members opposite – their priorities, as we have consistently said, is to their big business friends, the oil companies; \$350 million is what they have given. And you know what? Now they are standing up here and indicating that farmers are having problems, and I agree with them. They are having problems, because if you look at the farm bankruptcies in Saskatchewan, we have: in 1981 – 23; 1982 – 24; 1983, (once we got into the good boy and Tory times) – 48! And you know how many farm bankruptcies we've had in the first two months of 1984? We have had 12 farm bankruptcies so far in the first two months of this year.

So I think what we have here is very hollow, hollow sincerity by the members opposite. You know what they have done in their budget which they indicated to the people of Saskatchewan was going to be a hallmark in Canada? You know what they offered to the farmers of this province who are in major financial problems? They said they'll set up a little fund of \$4 million for those viable ones – if they need a little cash, can get it.

But divide that into the thousands of farmers that we have in Saskatchewan, and it's not even meaningful. We have been urging upon this government to give back a major benefit to the farmers, and certainly many of the programs that were in the last budget were copied from other provinces. The venture capital was copied from Ontario. Many of the programs have been tried in other Tory provinces.

What we have been advocating is that, at this time, a major infusion of cash has to be made available to the farmers, and we have urged, at this time, that the provincial government adopt a fuel rebate program. And certainly, if they can't think of one, I'm going to recommend to them

April 3, 1984

that they adopt the one that is in place in Alberta. And this is the fuel rebate, Alberta farm fuel distribution allowance.

The allowance reduces the cost of marked gasoline and diesel oil you use in farm vehicles and equipment by 31.8 cents per gallon. And that particular program, Mr. Deputy Speaker, over the course of the year, Alberta farmers on the average save \$1,500 on this program in one year.

Now I want to say that the crisis in agriculture is upon us. The difficulties are demonstrated by the statistics. And if you want more statistics, you can look at what has been happening in respect to the farm price index, and you find that the farm price index is down 52 points since 1981. The farms costs are now at 312, using 1971 as the base of 100.

So this . . . Well, I welcome taking a very, very serious look at one of the most important part of our economy, and I think that all responsible politicians in Saskatchewan need to do that. And I regret, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that what we have heard here is the same allegations, the same cheap political shots, accusing the NDP of what their policies were in the past.

But that's not what you're elected for, I want to tell the members opposite. You were elected to govern, and you can't defend your actions by opposing or criticizing the past. People of Saskatchewan are demanding some action, and you have no concrete policies to address the needs of the Saskatchewan people.

You know, it's rather humorous. There's two things that you hear the Tories indicating. They are saying that the federal government is bankrupt, that their deficit is too large.

And now, here is a government which inherited power in a province where the fiscal management couldn't be challenged in any other part of Canada. They took over a province in Saskatchewan which was the envy of anywhere in North America. I indicated the other day that they inherited a province with the lowest per capita debt. They inherited a province with balanced budget. They inherited a province with a well-managed economy. Today what we have is a massive deficit that they have driven this province into, and the very . . .

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** — Order, order! The member has had his 10 minutes. The debate continues.

**MR. KATZMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to join in this debate, rule 16. I had a good look at the amendment moved by the member from the opposition who lives in the past. And I wonder, when I look at his item 3, if he recognized the past at all, and the member that just spoke . . . (inaudible) . . . says, farm fuel rebate. Which government was it in this province that took it away after it came in? The NDP. When the fuel rebate was first suggested in this province, and the Leader of the Opposition was then in the opposition, he voted against a fuel rebate under the Thatcher government. They talk from two sides, I think, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, farmers recognize by the past, the present, and on to the future. The motion made by my colleague from Kelvington-Wadena addressed three things: past, present, and future. The past is the stabilization plan came in on grain. The past is there has been a build-up of almost a billion dollars there.

The present says there should be a triggering of that fund to assist the farmers for the future, and for present. The members didn't want to address that issue. The members wanted to address political issues rather than issues that will help the farmers of Saskatchewan.

The members on the opposition wanted to talk about costs to farmers. Let's talk about costs to farmers. Let's talk about the removal of this gas tax. Let's talk about the removal of the education on the power bill to the farmer. Let's talk about the removal of the tax for school on his home quarter. Let's talk about the things that would help that farmer.

But, at the same time, let's look at three proposals that are very important. Saskatchewan has no tax to the farmers, or anybody else, for fuel in this province. Therefore, the only tax left on fuel is by the federal government, and what we have asked for is the removal of same. Removal of same is what we asked them . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You know the member from his chair sits there and talks, but when he gets to his feet he talks out of both sides of his mouth, not one side. Let's get down to it, Mr. Member. Well, I heard an interesting comment which I wouldn't repeat, called "sanctimonious simpleton," and that's a good explanation of what we have over there.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the member from Souris-Cannington that moved this motion, indicated 10.2 cents per litre. That will make a sizeable addition. It will give a extra use of a major industry that we have in Saskatchewan, and all over Canada, for the fundamental producers of Canada in the food industry, be it fisherman or be it farmers. The removal of that tax will help them all.

You know, it's awfully interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you hit a nerve of somebody on that side of the House. They start to scream, and the ouch and hurt, and that's what happened when I rose to my feet. For some reason the other day when I spoke, the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg after he spoke, and I informed him of hovelling . . . he wouldn't recognize the truth if it hit him, from his own comments. Today, he moves an amendment. Once again, if he looks at his own amendment, he will find his own government, when he was in government, did the reverse of what he's asking now. Where's he coming from, Mr. Deputy Speaker? He doesn't seem to want to recognize the facts. That he's over there, he wants to say one thing . . . (inaudible) . . . making a comment like that, Mr. Speaker.

I look at "The Farming Industry" by a reporter out of Saskatoon called Kevin Hurst, who indicates: It's always easy for the opposition to pose give-aways. They don't have to be responsible. That's one difference between us when we're in opposition, and them, we were responsible, and the programs we promised in opposition are coming about as we are government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, the member from Souris-Cannington made the motion earlier. He talked about Alberta members, Saskatchewan members, Manitoba members, getting together to look at the problems that are facing the western farmer. And we are suggesting that that dialogue must continue. And why must that dialogue continue, Mr. Deputy Speaker? For the obvious reasons. The federal Liberals have had a habit of dividing and conquering, and when the NDP was Government of Saskatchewan, they assisted them whenever they could in arranging a divide and conquer to help the Liberal government of Ottawa. They're buddies — the ones they got back into power by the Saskatchewan members voting against the western government, led by Joe Clark, and Don Mazankowski, and Ray Hnatyshyn, and others. They seem to have two sides of their face they like to talk from.

But let's get back to the positive motion, the positive motion put in by my colleague. It calls for the triggering that will give the assistance to the farmers who have been paying into that plan. It's their money. They put it in. It's not federal money. It's not their money at all. It's put in by the farmers, and they've asked for a trigger-back to cause the thing to pay out. That's fair and just, and those fellows wouldn't know what fair and just is.

Second of all, we've said that we are the prime producers of Canada, and we are bringing in the revenue from all over the world to balance the budgets of Canada with our grain sales. Then recognize them as prime producers and remove the federal tax on oil. That's 10.2 cents, approximately, per litre. Can you imagine what that will do for every farm in Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, and Alberta, and for the fishermen of the same.

April 3, 1984

We've asked for two positive things to happen; not pie in the sky; not promises that can't be delivered – but positive things that can be delivered immediately. Now what will happen on these two things? We've had an indication, and they laughed from their seats when the former leader of the federal Tories suggested in Humboldt the other day that as a government the Tories will remove that tax. That's what Mr. Clark said. They didn't believe him. Well, if you take a look at the history of the Devine government, you will notice they made a promise – they delivered on the promise. Of all things, we have kept our word, and systematically, step by step, delivered.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, would they ask in their motion for the grain prices. Everybody would like to see the grain prices, but before grain prices, the biggest thing we want to see is some more quota. I don't care if you off us \$20 a bushel. If you can't sell it, it's going to sit in our bin, and we're never going to see the cash. We've got to sell our grain on the world market. We've got to get a good price for it. But to give us a price that's a pie in the sky and not be able to sell it is totally impossible.

You can't have it both ways. You've got to sell to have cash in pocket. There's an old saying in my particular faith that says, "I'll buy anything as long as it will pay the interest, principal, and leave me something left over." The name of the farmer who says, as long as I can produce and get some money left over from production, he's happy. The formula of squeeze in the world has not got him in that position today, and that's part of the problem.

The members sit on the opposite side and don't recognize that. I suggest to them that rather than fool with politics and make amendments that they totally defeated when they were in government, they should stand on their feet and support a positive motion made by our side and not play cheap politics, which is all they know how to play in this House. It's obvious the way they talk in the House that they can't follow the system.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me make one more comment before I take my place, and let's go back to the comment that was made earlier. When the farm fuel tax rebate was first brought into this province the Leader of the Opposition, who was then in opposition, voted against it. When there was two elections called in Saskatchewan, he brought it back in when he was government. Not until it was election time did they bring in the fuel rebate.

And then between elections when they were asked to bring it in, their former minister, Mr. MacMurchy, said, "No way". . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member says to me, "Sit down." Well, if that member had any truth in him, as I proved he has none yesterday . . . the other day when I quoted from his briefing book that he went to African with, that he stood on his feet and said one thing, but his briefing book said the total opposite. That man has no more credibility in this House at all, and that's why I'm saying that this amendment has no credibility, again for the same reasons. They said the opposite, when they were government, to what they say now as opposition, and therefore they have no credibility.

Mr. Deputy speaker, my time is just about ran out, and I would make one more comment. I challenge the members to vote in . . .

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** — Order. The member's time is up. Debate continues.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I listened to the members opposite with great interest, especially the member from Rosthern, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When I listen to the member from Rosthern, when talking about how concerned he was about this resolution of theirs, and the pay-out from the stabilization fund . . .

And I would have to say, Mr. Speaker, that we are interested about a pay-out from that stabilization fund, too. We feel that that fund should have paid out, and we continue to say that



that fund should be making a pay-out so the farmers would have some money.

But, Mr. Speaker, what do the members opposite say? When we introduced an amendment to their resolution, which would make it an even better resolution, they say that that is not good, that somehow our amendment was not good. The only thing that mattered was their criticism of the federal government, and that was it. They are not interested in saying what they are going to do to help the farmers of Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we introduced a resolution that would improve their resolution greatly. It's one that would save many farmers from bankruptcy. It's one that would allow farmers to get some money to put their crop in. You cannot totally depend on the federal government to make a pay-out because, as a Tory federal government or a Liberal federal government, you can never depend on them to do what's needed at any given time.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we are saying is that we should improve that resolution, improve that resolution so that the farmers could see something happening that would be, at least, to allow them to get a crop in this year. And our resolution says exactly that.

It would have provided for funding for the farmers. It would have provided them an opportunity to get the crop in without having to worry as to whether they're going to be able to do it, or whether they're going to have to fold up in the next month. That, Mr. Speaker, is what the intent of our resolution is.

But what do the members say? No, they don't believe in that amendment. They don't believe in that amendment at all. They don't even seem to believe in a fuel rebate. The member from Kelvington-Wadena, I believe it was, said that they believe in consulting with other jurisdictions, and I suppose he meant in believing in consulting with other governments in Canada.

Now, if they believe in doing that, what they should do first is consult with some of the farmers, talk to the farmers, so they would find out what the problems are. And the other thing that they should be doing, if they believe in consulting with other jurisdictions, look at what's happening in Alberta, where they are getting a 32 cent-a-gallon rebate, and that is a definite benefit to the farmers. It's a benefit that the farmers can see when they need it, when they have to buy fuel to put their crops in this spring. That would be a benefit to the farmers. But no, this government is saying they're not going to do that.

There's a program in Manitoba which guarantees an operating loan for the farmers. That would be an even greater benefit for the farmers, because then they would know that they could go to the financial institutions in this province and get some money to put their crop in with. But what is this government saying? No, we don't want to put that in either; we won't give the farmers a guarantee; we won't give them a fuel rebate; all we're going to do is pass a resolution asking Ottawa to give a pay-out out of the stabilization fund.

Well, Mr. Speaker, asking the federal government to do something is just like asking the fox to be in charge of the chicken house, because the federal government has never done anything that is going to assist the farmers at a give time, especially when they need it. And this government appears to be doing the same thing. They're not interested in helping the family farm. They talk a lot about the family farm; they talk about how interested they are in the family farm, and how important they think the family farm is to Saskatchewan and to the total economy of Canada.

They talk about how important that family farm is. But are they doing anything as a government to see that that family farm remains? Are they doing anything that is going to secure some of these family farms, and to allow them to making a living on that farm, rather than have to go bankrupt? No, Mr. Speaker, they aren't doing any of that. They just continue to talk about it. A lot of rhetoric, but no definite action, no action whatsoever from this government.

They criticized land bank; they criticized all the programs that we had in place, and they haven't put in a thing to replace any of those programs. They haven't come up with anything that will assure young farmers that they can remain on the farms, with any programs that this government has in place today. There is nothing in there that is going to give any security to young farmers on the farms today—no security whatsoever. Many of those young farmers are facing bankruptcy now, especially in the northern part of this province. They've had some bad years. Has this government been concerned enough to see if they can assist them in any way? Nothing whatsoever, Mr. Speaker.

They are not interested in saving that family farm. They just talk about it. And if they can convince everybody by talking about it that that is what they intend to some day do, and the people don't complain, then they feel happy about it. But, Mr. Speaker, talking about it is not enough. They should be taking action on it; that's what this government should be doing. But they are not taking any action on it. They just criticize everything that the opposition puts forward that may be of some assistance to the farmers.

Mr. Speaker, if you could help, and if this government would only help the farmers get their crop in this year, then that might give them at least some hope that if there's a good crop and the markets are good, that they can get out of some of the financial problems they have, and they wouldn't require further assistance from this government. Give them that opportunity. See that they are helped. And if you get a strong farm economy, you're going to have a strong business economy. The business sector is going to prosper. Everybody prospers.

So the emphasis should be placed on farmers at this point because they are the ones that are suffering most, and next is the business people that are suffering. And why are they suffering? Because the farmers have not got the money to spend. Mr. Speaker, this government just talks about the many things that they will do. They talk about a resolution to make a pay out from the federal stabilization fund, but they don't talk about anything that they are going to do.

I mentioned before that there are many, many programs that could be assisting the farmers today. They could be assisting them. But you choose not to come up with any programs that will help. What have you done as a government to really help farmers? What have you done to help them get their crop in this spring? Well, really, very little. Any information that I look at, I don't see anything that is going to help the farmers. I think the only reason that you came up with this resolution and based it on a federal policy or program is because you have recognized your own failures in the sector of agriculture.

You have recognized that you have not provided agriculture with any assistance. You have not provided them with any programs. You have recognized your own failures, and in order to try and rectify that, what do you do? You try to put the blame on somebody else, but if you are going to try and put that blame on somebody else, and you know that somebody else isn't going to do anything either and, namely, the federal government. And if they're not going to help the farmer, then it is your responsibility to change the direction that you are going in and see that some assistance is coming forward. And see that it comes forward immediately, and not something that might be promised for next year, or the year after, or five years from now. The farmers need that assistance now. The business people need that assistance now.

As a government you should be looking at how you can help in a time of financial difficulties in this province. But no, there is no assistance for farmers. No assistance for anyone. If any money is spent, it gets spent on bigger government.

We see services taken away from farmers. Is that going to help them get money to put their crops in this spring? You remove services. You remove any assistance that they may have had before, and then you stand up in this legislature, and you say that you are interested in the family farm – that you are somehow interested in saving every farmer that's out there and in helping

them in getting their crop in. And the only . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. It is my duty to advise the member his time has expired. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Saskatoon Eastview.

**MR. YOUNG:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I understand it, there's only a couple of minutes left in this 75-minute emergency debate. However, there are a number of points I think worth while bringing out with respect to the emergency motion. Certainly it's going to be an early spring, by all signs, and, accordingly, the urgency of the debate.

I'd like to point out to the members opposite that their record of helping the farmers was in the nature of succession duty taxes, wherein they gobbled up money from farmers by virtue of taking away a quarter section or two every time a farmer died. Certainly I recall, when that legislation came in, Mr. Robbins and Mr. Romanow made it abundantly clear to the populace that certainly they weren't after farmers; they were after the big businesses, whoever they were. But when it was all cut and dried, the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, was that 95 per cent of all revenue that came from the NDP succession duty taxes came from farmers. Great farm program, guys! Really wonderful. I'm sure everybody loved it.

Certainly your land bank program doesn't need any more talk about it. You understand: the people understand what that did for farmers. It drove up the price of land, and thus you got more out of the succession duties.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, our hire-a-student program this year extends to farmers, and that is something that the farmers can take advantage of in getting their crops in. I don't believe that point has been raised earlier.

We also have certainly, Mr. Speaker, a Premier who is a farmer, an agricultural economist, as opposed to the NDP's academic from Nova Scotia, and I think that our farm programs are certainly reflective of that.

I'd like to point out, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the latter portion of the motion: what would be the cost of fuel on the farmers' farms if the federal government did come down and remove its taxes as the provincial government here in Saskatchewan has done. Mr. Speaker, it would be 18.4 cents a litre. That's what the price would be. The federal government . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. Order, please. It's my duty to inform the members that the 75-minute time has elapsed.

## **PRIVATE BILLS**

### **SECOND READINGS**

#### **Bill No. 01 – An Act to incorporate the St. Paul's Cathedral Foundation**

**MR. WEIMAN:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is going to be a very short one. It's not one of those long ones that I usually like doing, but it's very close to my heart, and it gives me a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to move:

That Bill No. 01, an Act to incorporate the St. Paul's Cathedral Foundation, be now read a second time, and be referred to the standing committee on private members' bills.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to the select standing committee on private bills

**Bill No. 02—An Act to amend an Act to incorporate The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities**

**MR. SAUDER:** — I move that Bill No. 02, An Act to amend an Act to incorporate The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, be now read a second time and referred to the standing committee on private members' bills.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to the select standing committee on private bills.

**MOTIONS**

**Resolution No. 4 – Tourism and Small Business Activities**

**MR. MEAGHER:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues in the House, I'd like to make a few comments on this motion today, and particularly I'd like to compliment the government for a number of good things that came out of the reorganization of government after the election in April of '82.

And I think one of the most significant things was the creation of this new department. I think it clearly emphasizes and brings into focus the fundamental or basic difference between the philosophy of the proceeding socialist administration and this Conservative government. This new department, I believe it, by recognizing business and by creating a separate department for business, brings, as I say, into focus the really basic difference between these two philosophies.

This afternoon, in fact, in question period, the philosophy of the opposition, I think, was illustrated very well when they brought our tax rebate that was offered to all of the people of Saskatchewan and, in particular, small business, service businesses. It was so significant they described it as a denial of the purple gas benefit to farmers. That has to be the ultimate in negative thinking, negative socialist thinking.

We believe that business . . . We have to recognize that all of the real jobs, all of them in Canada, were created by business. None of the jobs that contribute to the economy of this country were created by either government or multinational or large corporations. In fact, there has been a net loss in jobs in the past two years created by big, so-called multinational corporations. All of the jobs in Canada have been created by small business, and we have to recognize small business.

As well, they recognize tourism as a business, which it is, and something that certainly hasn't been done over the past 10 years in Saskatchewan. One of the results of that past 10 or 15 years of sort of negative attitude toward tourism is that we are at a net loss position with the rest of North America in the tourism industry. We spend more money outside of Saskatchewan than is spent in Saskatchewan. So this new department has started what is a kind of revolutionary approach to this thing.

**A MEMBER:** — A revolution!

**MR. MEAGHER:** — Absolutely. We're deciding to spend a little bit of money outside of Saskatchewan, telling people about Saskatchewan, instead of spending hundreds of thousands of dollars inside of Saskatchewan telling the people of Saskatchewan about the wonders of our crown corporations, as has been done over the past 11 years by the previous government. It's called propaganda.

We believe that people in Toronto and Minneapolis and North Dakota and places like that should be told about the beautiful attraction this province has for tourists. And we're doing just that. In fact, this department has, this year, in this budget, allocated something in the neighbourhood of \$500,000 to promote Saskatchewan outside of Saskatchewan. And I believe

that that is a very important and significant contribution to the tourist industry here.

As well, this new department acts as an advocate for business in dealing with government. One of the major stumbling blocks in Saskatchewan has been for promoters, or other people involved in the tourist business, has been dealing with all the various departments of the provincial government. This new department will now take developers and promoters through the hoops, so to speak, and get them acquainted with all the rules and regulations that have been in place dealing with developers in the tourist industry.

Another thing that's being done has been a great number of these regulations have been abolished. That hurt the business community, hurt the people that are trying to create jobs, and hurt the people that are developing the tourist industry. We've gotten rid of thousands of these regulations – red tape, as they're described – and I think aptly described.

I believe that this new department is a very significant step in the right direction, toward the things that are important to this new government – creating jobs in the private sector, promoting the tourist industry, and bringing Saskatchewan into the 20th century. And so, for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in making this motion, seconded by my colleague from Cut Knife-Lloydminster:

That this Assembly record its support for the recognition of the significant contribution made to the province of Saskatchewan by the tourism industry and the small business community, and this Assembly commends the government for recognizing that contribution by establishing the new Department of Tourism and Small Business.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We on this side are pleased to enter a debate on this resolution which recognizes the significant contribution made to this province by the business community.

We do, however, have some serious reservations about the impact of the new Department of Tourism and Small Business. And I wish the minister were here to hear this, but I hope your . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — He's here.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Oh, he is here. Good. I didn't see him. He's just walking in, Mr. Speaker.

Shuffling, Mr. Minister, shuffling civil servants from one building to another, or from one department to another, will not, in itself, contribute a thing to the prosperity of Main Street, Saskatchewan. We have a government, Mr. Speaker, which speaks loud and glowingly of the outstanding growth and prosperity of this province during the NDP years of this government.

I don't need to remind you that the booklet put out by the Department of Economic Development and Trade, entitled *The Saskatchewan Promise*, did a tremendous job in telling the story. And my colleague, the member for Quill Lakes, discussed that during his budget debate.

This story is one that our Premier, a pawn in a chess game, who loves to brag on his many world-wide paid vacations . . . But I want to make the point that this is not the story that's being told to the people of Saskatchewan by this same Premier, and members of his party – a shameful display, a cynical, arrogant insult on the intelligence of the Saskatchewan voter.

We have a government which proudly proclaims in this same publication that things will now be

April 3, 1984

better because they have a new attitude. And what is this attitude, Mr. Speaker? What is this attitude? The pawn that sits in the front row there, keeps saying “open for business” every time his backroom masters push him to another move on the board.

Since coming to office, the crow of thumpers that pose itself as a government caucus has been treated to quite a spectacle – quite a spectacle. In the place of concrete action on low-cost loans to business, we have the “give her snoose program,” presented by none other than the number one . . . (inaudible) . . . thumper.

We on this side will give you full marks for originality. We never thought of such a unique program as “give her snoose, Bruce.” And even if we had, we probably would have been too embarrassed to use it.

The program serves generous portions of rhetoric – hot air designed to supplement the program of spinning wheels and clouds of dust.

Coming hard, Mr. Speaker, on the heels of the snoose program is the open for business bandwagon. This time the top thumpers were not even original. They weren't even original. The chief thumper – and this is almost like Peter Piper picked – but the chief thumper just went to the library; he dusted off some old slogans used by the former Liberal thumper, the late premier, Ross Thatcher.

He dusted off the old slogan by the late premier, Ross Thatcher. And the similarity does not end there. The similarity is not over. The late premier Thatcher just happened to preside over – you guessed it – a government department that administrated programs for the business community, including the tourist industry. No marks for originality with the PC department reorganization.

I want to speak briefly as I can about the PC record in office because it's such a shabby performance –nothing less than depressing. To this point the PC strategy for economic development in this province amounts to nothing more than cheerleading. All the promotion and ballyhoo has failed to produce concrete results. We have a government which is spending tens of thousands of dollars on a “buy Saskatchewan” program, but turns around and what does it do itself? What do they do? They hire a Manitoba Conservative MLA, Bud Sherman, to undertake an organizational study on the Saskatchewan Department of Health, as though there were no people that could do the job in Saskatchewan.

They hire a Toronto ad agency at the cost of \$100,000 to take film footage of Saskatchewan – something that our film industry would have loved to have, and could have handled without any difficulty. Why, why did they hire this firm, Mr. Speaker? Because this is the same slick ad agency that worked for them during the 1982 election campaign. Who knows what footage was taken by this ad agency at public expense. Who knows if it will turn up in the next PC election or not.

What else did they do? What else did they do, Mr. Speaker? They fire almost 400 highway workers, and then they turn around and they hire Alberta contractors. They hire Alberta trucks and Alberta drivers to maintain Saskatchewan highways. This is a government that gives \$100 million to the oil industry and turns around . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. If the member will recall the motion, you will find that you are a long ways from the topic of the motion, and I would ask the member to narrow his comments to deal with the things that are in the motion.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion that I was talking to was that this Assembly record its support for the recognition of significant contribution made to the province of Saskatchewan by the tourist industry and the small business community. And I was pointing out that the small business community isn't getting a chance. The small business community isn't . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — The member was referring distinctly to the firing of employees in the Department of Highways which has very little to do with small business.

**MR. ENGEL:** — I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. That topic was not on topic here. But they gave, this government gave \$100 million to the oil industry which turns around and imports Korean pipe for use in our oil fields when our own steel plant is shut down, and the oil industry and the businessmen are not working. They brag about the oil boom in which much of the action has been handled by Alberta rigs, and the small businessmen in Saskatchewan, the small trucks in Saskatchewan aren't getting the jobs.

They let tenders on a massive power project and promote the use of non-union contractors at Nipawin, employing imported non-union labour, while thousands of Saskatchewan construction workers are running out of employment benefits and turning to welfare. Are these actions of a government that knows what it's doing? Are these actions that are promoted by a government that is sincerely concerned about the state of the economy and the impact this will have on the small business community? Mr. Speaker, the answers are no.

On the contrary, these actions display nothing but a shallow, crass attitude. We have tax breaks for the wealthy in the form of incentives. We have grants to the processing sector which contribute 2 per cent to the Saskatchewan business, but nothing for the other 98 per cent — nothing for the 98 per cent.

We have a PC party which promises low-interest loans when it was looking for votes to the small-business community. But we have a Minister of Finance who now says that the problem is not high business rates, but unstable interest rates. A slight change, but a significant change.

Mr. Andrew says that he has been advised that unstable interest rates are the problem. But what does Mr. Bob Finlay, executive director of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, say? He says that the PCs have failed to address the problem of high interest rates. I want to emphasize this point. High interest rates. He made this point in June '83 after the last budget, and after this budget it is fair to say that the PC government has failed again to deal with this problem. What value is it to the small-business person who is struggling to stay alive, if he can no longer afford the terms of his loan at stable interest rates?

In assessing how this government has performed for the businessmen, the *Financial Post* sums this budget up, and the PCs, very well. And I have a copy of their article here. In the *Financial Post* dated the 31st day of the third month, 1984, in this week, it says:

Sceptics say the minister's intentions are good, but achieving results won't be easy. Mainly, small business are in such rough shape they will be hard pressed to take advantage of the new measures.

They will be hard pressed to take advantage of the new measures. They ask me: what else did they say? Sure, there's glowing reports from the big businessmen, but this resolution deals with the small businessmen. This resolution deals with the little minister's department, who reorganized, removed staff members, but he didn't do anything concrete in helping the small businessmen.

In assessing how this government has performed for the businessmen, the *Financial Post* sums it up very well:

Mainly, small businessmen are in such rough shape that they will be hard pressed to take advantage of new measures.

More cheer-leading, more tub-thumping, but very little in the way of economic leadership. That

April 3, 1984

is why I had a little amendment for this motion, Mr. Speaker. I have a little amendment here that will correct this situation, and I move:

That the motion, Resolution No. 4, be amended by striking out all the words after “record” in the first line and substituting a good amendment. The substitution is:

Its recognition . . .

And let me read it how it will sound:

This Assembly record its recognition of the valuable contribution made to the Saskatchewan economy by the tourist industry, and by the small business community, and expresses its regret that the establishment of the Department of Tourism and Small Business has not been accompanied by the introduction of a 9.5 per cent small business loan program, as promised by the members opposite by the Progressive Conservative party, before the last election.

I so move, seconded by my colleague, the member for Quill Lakes.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HOPFNER:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess I’d have to relate this little speech of mine, that I’m going to have, to Peter Piper picked the member from Assiniboia. I think that if the member didn’t learn anything, I thought he might have learned when he was on a committee prior to the House reconvening. I thought that some of our initiatives towards small business would have rubbed off on the member opposite.

Mr. Speaker, when a man raises his voice in the tone of the voice that we have just heard in this legislature today, and speaking in the manner he has spoken, shows that there is just a total negative feeling over there on the side of the opposition. I think, Mr. Speaker, that when the new government came to office, there has been new initiatives that have been created in this province that they just cannot grasp and really, in all reality, cannot understand that the programs that have been coming from this side of the House have been nothing but popular programs; and the people of Saskatchewan are moving and thrusting ahead with all the success and all the willingness that has been shown within the last 16 to 18 to 23 months.

I would think that, Mr. Speaker, it goes back to day one when we took office, and we had the removal of the gasoline tax. What did this do for small business? Well, I’ll tell you, Mr. Speaker, what this did for small business was exactly . . . It put about – across the province of Saskatchewan — about \$200 per average family in the province in the back pocket of these people so they could go out across the province of Saskatchewan here, and go down these little towns and villages in the province, and have that additional dollar to spend on those little grocery stores, little hardware stores, little barber stores, and whatever you have out in Saskatchewan.

And let me tell you, these little communities are beginning to thrive. They’re beginning to open up new businesses now. I know, in my constituency, if you go into the town of Maidstone, for instance, we’ve got a harness shop started up – a harness repair shop and manufacturing shop. The man had an accident several years ago; he could no longer carry on in farming. He became a wheelchair victim and he’s got the use of his arms and that is it. Through that incentive he’s put together a nice, small, little, enterprising business, and through the help and the incentives of the government, by bringing people back into this province, his doors are going to be open to new bucks and he’s going to be able to thrive.

These little things, Mr. Speaker, make Saskatchewan, make the economy, make things available to the less fortunate people in the province of Saskatchewan.



I want to say, too, you know it goes back into the fact of the housing situation. I can remember when we guaranteed the people of the province of Saskatchewan here a 13.25 per cent interest rate on their homes and a \$3,000 grant for the building of a new home, in addition to that of the \$3,000 that was of a federal income grant. And this had inspired the building and the jobs across Saskatchewan. It had created an atmosphere out there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was unbelievable. Contractors and labourers had told me that this is one of the best things that could have happened at the time when the recession was taking its toll on all the other provinces. In Saskatchewan it created new jobs, jobs for many, many individuals.

And, Mr. Speaker, going back to these new jobs, I'd like to quote a few things here that my minister had quoted to the individuals under his incentive programs that he had been speaking on. I just want to relate them back to the *Hansard* of March 30, 1984, if they had been in the House here paying attention to what the minister was saying. He says:

Major revisions to the petroleum royalty structures has resulted in record drilling activity and put more than 1,000 people back to work.

One thousand people. And Mr. Speaker, I come from one of those related oil areas in the constituency of Cut Knife-Lloydminster. And I'll tell you that if it wasn't for the oil industry up there, there would be many farmers that they had led down the garden path many years ago would not have their farms today.

They've got jobs with the related oil servicing area, as well as going back to their farms now and making a viable industry until we can get the federal government to recognize that they are in a problem situation.

The small-business employment program, Mr. Deputy Speaker, initiated last year, had created in the neighbourhood of about 3,600 new jobs, and 2,800 of those ended up to be permanent positions. I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are facts and figures that are tabled in this legislature, and yet they want to stand over there on the other side of this House and debate it. You know, why would we, as a government, want to put out false information like this, false information that they say is in these kind of numbers?

These numbers here spell out the truth. But it reverts back, Mr. Speaker, to the scare tactic that we're eliminating jobs, we're giving it to Alberta contractors, and everything else like this. You know, I heard that from the day we entered this legislature and took over as a new government with new initiatives, about everybody coming in from Manitoba. Well, I would suggest then, that if Manitoba was so great, why are they coming here? I can't understand why the Manitoban contractors would even want to come and bid in Saskatchewan if things were so great under the NDP government in Manitoba.

Talking about Alberta people. Well, I'll tell you I live close to the Alberta border—18 miles off the Alberta border, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to tell you something: that those people that are saying they're coming back to Saskatchewan and taking the jobs from Saskatchewan people were originally Saskatchewan people. They were driven out of this province by the egotistic attitudes of the members opposite when they were in government. They didn't listen to the needs of the people in those particular days. They thought they could create a bureaucracy that would be bowing to their every demands put upon them.

Saskatchewan people. They were driven out of this province by the egotistic attitudes of the members opposite when they were in government. They didn't listen to the needs of the people in those particular days. They thought they could create a bureaucracy that would be bowing to their every demands put upon them, that they were surprised April 26th they didn't last. Their government meant everything. That's right. They thought that bigger government was everything. Drove all the initiative out of the individuals out there.

But I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in my constituency in the last six to eight months, has really shown a significant increase in small business – small business which I would suggest has taken probably its reversal, and a toll that it had taken previous years to 1980 has now increased, and I would suggest in somewhere about 50 to 60 new businesses in my constituency. And, Mr. Speaker, if they want to question me on it, I would be more than willing to bring the names of these businesses forth into this House and table them, because I'll tell you it's nothing but positive growth out in my area.

Abolition of a thousand useless regulations that were choking the day-to-day operations of business also created a new climate – a new climate in trust of government – a trust, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people out there in Saskatchewan now can grab hold of their individual little initiatives now, and go out there full throttle and making something of it.

I'll tell you, the rhetoric that comes from across there, the doom and gloom, the crying, you know, I sometime wonder if those individuals can actually face their constituents when they get back home. It's too bad that some of their constituents can't see them over the televised media – as I know my area doesn't get this particular type of coverage, and I'm sure most of theirs don't either, Mr. Deputy Speaker – but I'm saying, if they did, they could probably find out just exactly how ridiculous they do sound on the floor of this legislature.

You know, they talked about the fact that we have done nothing for the industry, but small business today is telling me that with the incentives that we're putting across by expanding our programs into the other countries, and by creating an interest in these European countries, and indeed all over the world, it's suggesting to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the manufacturing and processing industry in this province is really, really beginning to have a great, great impact upon the economy out here.

And I think by initiating the removal of that 5 per cent tax on the electrical rates, and the tax on manufacturing and processing, through this last budget, just ensures the fact that we are willing, as a people of Saskatchewan, to work with them to create long-term jobs so that these people can plan their families, and plan their success on a long-term base. Not these band-aid programs that they've been so used to over the last decade.

No one likes to increase taxes, and we, I think . . . (inaudible) . . . through our budget but I think probably I should correct that. Not “no one,” but I do believe there are eight members across the floor that may just want to do that. I am, for one, probably more sympathetic than even the members opposite to the needs of the welfare recipients, the unemployed, and the small business. But I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that long-term solutions are costly solutions, and they must be met head on. And it's just a matter of weeks, months – where these long-term solutions will begin to really spread and bloom into job opportunities for all the people in Saskatchewan.

We have refused to take part in the recession. Small business has refused to take part in this recession. The people . . . (inaudible) . . . labour on the labour's back in the province of Saskatchewan, refuse to take part in this recession. And they proved that on April 26 when we told them of our positive policies. And we're not going to take back. I'm not going to stand here for any one minute, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to say that we are always 100 per cent correct. But, by gosh, we've got to try things, and to try things we've got to be open for criticism. And I'm sure there's enough of us over here across the media that gives us a better opposition, if you will . . . that there's enough of us over here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be able to criticize our own policies and make that criticism. I would suggest that in our caucus, the criticism that we have in our caucus to different policies, would – the comparison, if the public could see that comparison, would understand that there is no need for an opposition. Our criticism, that I feel that I bring into my caucus, is not a personal criticism, but it's the ear of the people out there. And I'm sure the rest of my colleagues share that same thing out there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've been working to beautify the province of Saskatchewan by creating the new Department of Tourism, by throwing more millions of dollars into the incentive pools, to bring . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . the member opposite picked up on my word "throwing" – throwing into the pool to create incentives for people to come into the province of Saskatchewan. I want to say to the member opposite, that if he was not willing to invest a buck, he'd never be in business. If he was not willing to put a buck out, how would he expect anybody to invest and give a buck back? It just goes to show that he has never been in business before.

Mr. Speaker, as we were coming out with our budget, and talking of the incentives that we are putting out in the province of Saskatchewan towards small business and tourism, I wanted to point on that beautification thing again.

Our highways, our highways – we're spending more dollars on highways. We're getting more miles built for less dollars. We are building safe bridges out there for the tourists to be able to come into our province and not worry about colliding at the Borden Bridge area, at the foot of the bridges, at the curves, the dangerous curves, etc. Our ministers are working to make tourism a safe and a beautiful, beautiful province to come to.

I want to say that with the roads that we're building today that driving through my route, the Yellowhead route, it's become a lot safer over the past couple of years. We're straightening the more dangerous curves out on the Yellowhead. We're widening the shoulders. We've got an active, active awareness program out there now about the drinking drivers and the police are out there policing it well – regular stop checks and everything. It's making it safe for these tourists to come into our province, and enjoy us. By creating this incentive, for bringing these people in, it's helping the small business, and it's rubbing off on all these job opportunities.

I want to say that, with . . . Jumping into another area of oil again . . . I wanted to go back on one thing, and it's that the members opposite have properties that are now being drilled out, explored by these incentive programs that this government has put out, and I haven't seen him turn these dollars away. I haven't seen these . . .

We had an Opportunities '83 program to assist all sectors in the province of Saskatchewan for putting our youth, our students, to work. And I want to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this is one of the most successful programs that had been. And I want to say that I'm very proud of my minister of this budget here of putting the program together again for student job creation for this summer.

I think probably that we've got to strengthen that area for our students so that they, themselves, can feel a confidence building, and carry on with their studies so that they can meet the demands that are going to be put upon them by the small business in the province of Saskatchewan and, indeed, any business in Saskatchewan.

I think when we've heard about the talk of the opposition in the background, they talking about big business, and multinational corporations, etc., I've asked them once before to point out to me just exactly what they meant by multinational corporations. Because I look around in Regina and Saskatoon, I look around in Prince Albert, Yorkton, I look in Lloydminster – all I actually really do see out there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are good, genuine little businesses, and they're working hard to make ends meet.

Today I can honestly tell you that with the interest being down, and . . . (inaudible) . . . the government off their backs a little bit, a little more breathing-space, you know these people are becoming more and more successful. These students are going to have a refreshed look on the business that we have in Saskatchewan this summer.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we've gone through to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . the

April 3, 1984

member from Assiniboia, we've gone through this talk when the member for Assiniboia had suggested about all this firing that we've been doing throughout our departments. You know, I want to tell you that as far as I'm concerned that if it was true, I want to say, if it was true that through these firings that if we fired the total civil service, somebody's going to have to do the job. You know, the way I look at it in small business, if I need an accountant, I hire an accountant. If I need a lawyer, I hire a lawyer. If I need a glass washer, I hire a glass washer. If I need a boot polisher, I hire a boot polisher. If I need a hairdresser, I'll hire a hairdresser. These are things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that these people should begin to realize, that it is not necessary for the government to only have these people, that it can be initiated through the private entrepreneur system. It can be delivered, and it can be delivered at a competitive price, much cheaper, as it is proven through highways and many other departments since the private sector has been able to take care and take over.

I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that just through the incentives, through health, education, the dollars that this government has poured, the increased budgets – ever since we've come in, it's been on a total incline, that these spin-offs end up back into small business – end up into tourism. We've got health facilities in case somebody gets sick while they're here visiting or for the services from one of these hospital organizations, and schools. They give to these small entrepreneurs in the province – the business that these organizations give to the small entrepreneurs in the province, all relates, it all relates.

Sask Power, for instance now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is doing all they can to give their own business to the private entrepreneurs of the province of Saskatchewan.

These are progressive, and I want to stress that – progressive attitudes from these various organizations and departments to these little individuals that are trying to make a go of it. And I want to say this much, I'm very proud, I'm very proud to be able to say that these people, and over the backs of the farmer, between both of these, the farmers and small business in this province, I want to tell you, I take my hat off to these individuals because they're the hardest working individuals. And they employ the biggest group of people in the province of Saskatchewan, and the spin-off from these individuals is just phenomenal.

The tax base that come into the coffers, that come into the coffers so that we can spread back in . . . it's like a . . . into the economy of the province is unreal. We can take a buck, and you can put it in a . . . if you can visualize a buck being a piece of pie, or a whole pie, and the way that buck, by giving it to the white people out there, just explodes into many, many, many bucks, is unreal.

It's like the individuals that used to sit back and wait for little megaprojects to happen – a million dollar megaproject, or something like that, you know. And they say, oh boy, if we get this million dollar megaproject, the spin-off is going to be 3, 4 million. Economics tell you that.

Well, the multiplying effects that have taken place since we've taken government is shown in the areas out there, in rural Saskatchewan, out there in the small area. You don't see it here in this legislature. You can't even visualize it here in this legislature. I challenge these fellows, the members opposite, to leave Regina, go out where the true and the real world is, and look in their little communities. Even the member stopped in the town of Shaunavon, maybe. The member from Shaunavon should stop there. I'll bet you that little community is progressing since we took office.

How about the member from Assiniboia? I'll tell you, you know, their terrible attitude has changed. I had a farm family out in Lashburn, Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The parents were getting up in age and the family had to leave the farm. They were all in Alberta; they were all in Alberta. And I'm even saying Alberta – not Manitoba. They were in Alberta. They were forced out of Saskatchewan. There was not an opportunity, not an opportunity for them to even compete in the farm field. They couldn't get a job to subsidize their farm. I want to say that all three children now are back with their parents – all three of their children. This elderly couple is

now able to sit back, retire, and let their children – their three boys – take over the family farm.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this is one field that these people have never regarded as small business – the farm field. I think every time that they stood up it was always multinationals. I want to say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the farming industry is a small business like the little hardware store, like anything else. And I want to say that if they get out there in the real world, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they'll understand that our policies have created a positive reaction across this province, and that I would be very darned concerned . . . I'd be very concerned about the fact that they may not be around next time we call an election.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SVEINSON:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to rise for a few moments this evening and speak on small business in Saskatchewan and where it's come, in the last two or three years.

I think the most positive, the very first initiative of this government certainly addressed small business with the direction that we were going to take as a provincial government. And within 12 minutes of taking power and taking the reins of power in Saskatchewan, the provincial cabinet removed the gasoline tax.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SVEINSON:** — That meant approximately \$100 million into the pockets of the provincial consumer, the man that's driving his car to work every day to a small business place, the man who runs five or six trucks out of his small business place, the man who runs machinery on gasoline. The benefits spin through the system – called the multiplier effect.

We followed that with some very innovative programs designed to stimulate the provincial economy and address the immediate problems of the Saskatchewan home owner. We followed that with the MIRP (Mortgage Interest Reduction Program), another program that relieved and improved the attitude of the home owner to the degree that he no longer had to fear the loss of his most prized possession, a possession that his family needs the most – cover, a roof over their heads.

Now the philosophy of small business, I feel, is very important when we discuss the thrust of small business in the province. And I think the members opposite would tend to agree that most small business runs on the faith of the entrepreneur, and the attitude of the people who support him. And many small businesses are supported from a family base, not the multinational base that the members opposite continue to dwell on.

Our small business base is the engine of our economy, and our families in this province fuel that engine. And we are committed, as a government, to support in any manner possible, the engine, and the healthy running of that engine, which is responsible for most of the business done in this province, and that is, small business. We can include in that sector, farmers. We can include fishermen, as there are actually fishermen in Saskatchewan who survive on the fishing industry in northern Saskatchewan. We can go right through the system to our lawyers and accountants in Saskatchewan. So small business auctioneers was just mentioning.

The entrepreneurial pillar of small business is small, is beautiful. Small is sometimes beautiful, of course, is probably closer to the truth. But with respect to small business, it gets bigger and bigger with time and becomes more important in our economy, only if the government of the day is willing to address the importance of the small businessman in our economy.

And I think if you'll notice the past history of the province, there was a period of 20 to 25 years

April 3, 1984

where the small businessman, the family man, the graduate of our universities, the graduates from our high schools, those people who couldn't find jobs in this province, were forced to go elsewhere.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — 38 years.

**MR. SVEINSON:** — Over a 38-year period there were hundreds of thousands of productive people who left this province because of a repressive attitude of a government philosophy, and I won't get into that. But I can say that since April 1982 that philosophy has changed. The attitude of the people have changed. They are again in a position where they have the confidence in their own abilities. They want to stay in Saskatchewan, and they're moving back into Saskatchewan to participate in the economy of a province that has refused, has refused to participate in a recession that has been "the deepest since the recession".

Small businesses' belief in people is belief in the individual. I think the history again of the philosophy that has run this province for the last 38 years, less the last two, was based on belief in government, belief in the guidance of government so that people could survive, not through their own efforts and not through their own initiatives, but through the efforts and initiatives supplied by governments. And governments of the day, which included, starting back in 1944, the CCF, followed through by the NDP, did not a great deal to substantiate the basic, the basic potential that this province has. It's recognized within the country and within the western world. It's one of the richest bases of natural resources and human resources available.

The natural resources – the budget addressed some initiatives for mining, and mining is a sector that I think most residents of Saskatchewan has looked upon basically as a potash industry. We have, in Saskatchewan, a base metal industry that has virtually been untouched. In 1971, I believe, and I'm not sure that the facts are absolutely correct, but one of the last producing metals mines in the province, Anglo-Rouyn, the shaft was actually cemented in, and I said I say this on the basis that I've heard it's true. And it was cemented in because of the government that was elected to replace a government that took the mining industry out of a long history of non-productive existence, and elevated it into an industrial base of 10 of the strongest mining complexes in North America, our potash industry.

That industry is not small business, but there is a spin-off from that industry that addresses a great base of small business in Saskatchewan. The initiatives we initiated in the budget address a whole new mining industry, that of the base metals, and we're going to see in the next 10 years in this province the success of a program that again can be initiated by the very small entrepreneur, the fellow up there that's staking claims in an industry, or for an industry that will recognize his abilities, and his efforts, to an industry that can expand into hundreds and thousands of people. The Hemlo in north-western Ontario has been known, the existence of the gold in the area has been known since the '30s, but it actually has expanded into an industry in that area that last summer employed 20,000 people.

We have that potential in northern Saskatchewan, and the budget addressed that potential. And I think we'll find that in the next ensuing two to five years that there'll be a great deal of exploration – exploration done by small businessmen in the base metals industry in Saskatchewan. And that exploration will be followed up with the formation, the foundation of new mines. And new mines employ hundreds of people, and new mines spread into the economy, supporting hundreds of small businessmen, all over Saskatchewan. And we'll even allow that to spill over our borders. We'll even allow that to spill out over our borders.

Our mining industry in this province could even support small business in Ontario and Quebec. It could even support small business in Germany, and in places where the initiative is in place to develop the machinery and manpower for that kind of development.

The former government never addressed the abilities that we have in that field. We felt it was

timely and very important to do so in Saskatchewan, and through our minister, and our very capable minister, he has addressed the initiatives. I personally have had calls from mining people in British Columbia and in Alberta, asking whether these initiatives are of long-term (and I've certainly assured them they are), and are they based on bringing more and new initiatives into the province, or are they based on short-term job creation? And they are based on long-term initiatives to increase the awareness and address an industry that is long overdue in Saskatchewan. It's been overdeveloped in other parts of the country at the expense of the Saskatchewan taxpayer.

Now, relating to the mining industry, the taxpayer has had certainly a great deal of participation. As we all can recollect, the potash take-over by the former government — \$700 million borrowed — 700 million. We now have an equity position, as taxpayers in Saskatchewan in the potash industry, of 1.25 billion. The returns last year on that industry, on the industry that we spent 1.25 billion to purchase from other developers, our returns were \$400,000. And we had to change the accounting structure to allow us that kind of a return.

We feel it's time . . .

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** — Order. It being 5 o'clock, I now leave the Chair until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.