

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

December 6, 1984

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today it's our pleasure to have with us a group of students from the constituency of Swift Current; more importantly, they are from Ashley Park School, grades five and six. They have with them several parents, plus their teacher, Mrs. Bobbi Shinske.

Mr. Speaker, they have been in the process of studying the theory of government through social studies. I would hope today that they will perhaps see the practice of democracy and government in action.

I would ask that the members, along with myself, welcome them, and I will look forward to meeting them after question period.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, and to this legislature, a class of 35 grade eight students from my constituency. They are from a small community, a rural community called Wymark.

The rural communities in a lot of places got their names from the railroad companies, like the CPR, and there's a Y in the railway there, and that's how this small community got its name.

And I'm going to meet with these grade eight students later on. They're accompanied today by their teachers, Mr. Kuz, and Mr. Knelsen, parents, Pat Newburgh, and Mr. and Mrs. Koethler and Jack Fehr, and I wish the members of the Assembly to welcome them.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Staffing of Gas Inspection Branch

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour, and has to do with the death of one of my constituents, and with the report of a coroner's jury which suggests that PC government cut-backs had a great deal to do with that death.

This 65-year old woman died of carbon monoxide poisoning in late October, even though an SPC inspection found a month earlier that the furnace was defective, and had reported that to the gas inspection branch of your department which was supposed to make sure such defects were corrected. But your gas inspection branch, understaffed because of cut-backs, did not follow up, and as a result a 65-year old woman died from this faulty furnace.

Mr. Minister, my question is: what steps have you taken to properly staff the gas inspection branch so that such a tragedy isn't going to happen again?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I regret, also, the fact that a death has occurred which we have heard about today. I want to advise this Assembly that I have instigated a complete inquiry

into this situation at my Department of Labour level. I have only heard it on the news and in the newspapers, and I'm wanting to have the opportunity to investigate or to study the inquest's transcript which we are going to be receiving, probably this afternoon.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — New question, Mr. Minister. Let me state the obvious for you that shouldn't require a great deal of investigation, and that is that something as dangerous as a defective gas furnace should have been followed up immediately by the labour department's gas inspection branch. But it wasn't, because there were four inspectors, two of them with administrative duties, and two of them left to cover an area including the city of Regina, an area running east to the Manitoba border, north to Yorkton, west to Nokomis, and including Melville, Esterhazy, Moosomin, Craven, Raymore, Lumsden, Weyburn, and Estevan.

Surely, Mr. Minister, it must be obvious that your department is understaffed, and I'd suggest — I'd ask you if you wouldn't give an undertaking to the House to rectify the situation immediately.

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I just advised the member opposite that an investigative report is going to be provided and carried out and, once I have that report, I will certainly table it to the legislature. I want to know all the facts before I make any comments whatsoever. As I said earlier, I regret the incident, and we will certainly do everything that we can to find out the cause, if there was any neglect, and I will wait for my report before I make any further comments.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Peter Whitehead, a gas inspector with your department, is reported to have answered a question at the coroner's inquest, the question being whether or not such a tragedy could happen again, and his answer is reported to be, unfortunately, yes. Are you prepared to act on the basis of the information given to the coroner's inquest by your staff and not further delay the issue by having yet another investigation?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want the opportunity to talk to my staff personally, not reading about it in newspaper columns and in various reports. I want to go through that process with my staff, and I believe that is only right. And once I have that information, and I'm satisfied, I'll table that information in the legislature.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — New question, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour, and it concerns the issue which we're just discussing.

Here is a case where a furnace was inspected in September. A death took place on October 25th. The fact that the inspection had not been made came to light in your department on November 5th. And on December 6th, a month later, you say that you're going to look into the matter — look into the death which occurred on October 25th because of lack of staffing.

Are you not prepared to act now, without further delay, in the light of the fact that it's six or seven weeks since this death occurred?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I've advised the members opposite that I am acting immediately by asking for a complete report and will be personally investigating the allegations and the statements made, and we will certainly pass that information on, once I have it.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — New question. Mr. Minister, are you telling this House that you were unaware that your department is understaffed in the gas inspection branch? Are you telling this House that Mr. Peter Whitehead would tell a coroner's jury that his department is dangerously understaffed and would never tell you that? Is that what you're telling this House?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the very thing that I want to discuss with my staff. I want to hear it directly from them, and this is where the investigative report will show up

any negligence, or what may have occurred. And this is what I've asked them to do. The investigation is already in process, and we'll be contacting you in the future.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Supplementary, but I'm repeating the same question. Is this the first time today, at 10 after 2, that you have become aware that your department's dangerously understaffed? Did your department not tell you this before that?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, it's one person's opinion that it's understaffed, and I want to hear those reasons, and I want to have that opportunity to discuss the thing face to face with my staff to find out exactly what went wrong, if anything, within the department.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, Mr. Minister, what is it going to take to convince you that you have a dangerous situation? How large must the tragedy get before you're finally convinced that your department is dangerously understaffed?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are suggesting that this is so. It may be. But I want to discuss it all with my own people in the department. I just heard about the press, or saw the press release at noon, the coroner's report at noon. I haven't had the opportunity to go and sit down with my staff.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I want to understand what the minister is saying. There was a death on October 25th at a house. On November 5th it became clear to your department that the house where the death took place was one where an inspection had been requested a month before that. Did this matter not come to the attention of the senior officers of your department, that coming together of the death and the fact that the report, the request for an inspection had been mislaid for one month, did that not get reported to you?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I was aware of the death a number of weeks ago. And I'm saying that it is very, very regrettable. But it isn't until today that we learned of the comments that were made by one of my staff members. We have that . . . I want that opportunity to talk to my staff and determine exactly what happened, as I said, face to face.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — New question. Mr. Minister, this woman whose name was Polly Redhot, who was an acquaintance of mine — I'm not going too far to call her a friend of mine — I knew her well. She lived in a rather dilapidated house which she rented down by the railway tracks. And I ask you, Mr. Minister, if she died on October 26th and you knew about it at that time, why haven't you taken steps before this to rectify a situation that is patently dangerous when your field inspectors don't have the time to follow up on reports?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've said before, it's the member opposite that is trying to determine whether I'm understaffed or not. We will make that decision in our department. But here again I want to understand all the circumstances first, and that's what's happened today with the instigation of a total inquiry, and that is now in progress.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Supplementary. New question, Mr. Minister. Your question is just incomprehensible. If you knew of . . . Your answer is incomprehensible. If you knew of Polly Redhot's death several weeks ago, why have you done nothing until it's raised in the legislature, to your public embarrassment? Why can you not act before you are publicly embarrassed about something? Why couldn't you have taken action before this?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we have taken action. We've started an investigation into the whole matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Today, now.

HON. MR. McLAREN: — I never said today. We have started an investigation within our own

department to determine what has happened, and I want that opportunity to speak to my staff, as I've said many times before.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Minister, I would like you to be a little more precise about this. Your first answer suggested you were going to — future tense —investigate it, after the press had publicly embarrassed you by raising it, after the coroner's jury had publicly embarrassed you by raising the issue. You now say an intensive investigation has been going on. Which of the two answers is correct; and if it's your latter answer, would you tell me when the investigation began?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, the investigation that I'm wanting to do, totally, is starting today. But we had looked into some of the possibilities. Some of the questions that have come up since seeing the coroner's report we were not aware of. Those are the items that we want to follow through on in our investigative report, and that has been commenced today.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, let me go back then to an earlier question which you refused to answer. Did Mr. Peter Whitehead and no one else in your department tell you you were understaffed; did they tell the coroner's jury that first? Because I find that answer difficult to accept. Were you not told by the officials in your department that your department was dangerously understaffed in an area which is key to public safety?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we are working in our department with a staff. You are saying that we are understaffed. We have 280 people in our department. One person may say that we are understaffed. I haven't had that opportunity to sit down with this gentleman personally, Mr. Whitehead, to ask in what areas, what happened in the period of time that we are talking about here, and that is what we are going to be doing in the next day or two.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, the person who made the comment was no minion in your department. The coroner's jury asked a representative of your department to come, so they sent the person who's responsible. They sent a senior official who was the assistant chief gas inspector for the Department of Labour. This was not some minion in your department who made the comment. It was a senior official.

I ask you again, Mr. Minister: has the assistant chief gas inspector never, directly or indirectly, passed the comment on to you that his department is unable to protect public safety with something as important as gas furnaces?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member opposite that the assistant chief gas inspector has just been appointed. We just had the early retirement of the former chief inspector. And I haven't had that opportunity of spending much time with Mr. Whitehead, and we will be doing that and discussing this whole situation and reporting to the legislature.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary is this: in the light of the fact that your complement is seven, presumably after diligent review at the time of the last budget, and you have three vacancies, do you not agree that if seven was the right number at the time of the last budget, then four is grossly understaffing the inspection branch of the gas department?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, at the time of the incident it was five . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, certainly. I just told you that the assistant chief inspector was just promoted within our department, and we haven't filled that position. We are actively looking for inspectors. We have been for a number of months. But this will all be contained in my report when I have received it.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Minister. Did a member of the gas inspection branch stationed at Weyburn or Estevan recently retire?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, we've had a number of retirements in the Department of Labour, likewise in a lot of departments around government. And I believe Estevan-Weyburn there is an inspector position there. But here, again, we are actively looking and have interviewed some people, but no hirings have taken place.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Do I understand, then, that there used to be a gas inspector located in Weyburn or Estevan to serve that area, and there is not now a gas inspector in that area. Is that correct? Is it also correct that you knew that the person was going to retire, and you took no steps to fill the position immediately upon his retirement?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, that is not true. We are actively looking for gas inspectors. I've been doing that for a number of months now. It's difficult finding qualified people to take those positions, and we have had a number that we've had to bypass because, in our mind, their qualifications weren't sufficient. We are actively looking, and we will be filling some of those positions as soon as possible once we determine what is totally or essentially needed.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — A short question which should admit it of a short answer. I gather you went some time in the recent past from five inspectors to four inspectors, with the retirement of someone. When did that happen?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — The acting chief was just promoted within the last few weeks, and we've moved him from within. And when we made him acting, that took one person out of the field, and we are, as I said, actively looking for somebody to take those positions.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, Mr. Minister, someone's negligence has at least contributed to the death of a constituent of mine — a person who many people who know of her, call her a very fine person. And you're standing here, Mr. Minister, and telling me that since that's happened, you have actually reduced the staff in the gas inspection branch? Is that what you're suggesting to this House — that since the tragedy, you are even more understaffed than you were at the time because now you have taken somebody out of the field and you have promoted him?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, what I'm saying is that there was five out of seven that were in place at the time of the regrettable incident. Since then, we moved up one person to take the active position. That has reduced . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, it's stated in the report. We know that there's people that are taking retirement, and we have been doing this for the last several months and trying to get replacements.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — New question, Mr. Minister. With something as important to public safety as gas inspection, I think it ought to be obvious to everyone, even the Minister of Labour, that gas is an inherently dangerous substance. Should you not have launched your study before you cut the size of your staff in half — before you reduced the staff of this vitally important department to a fraction of what it was when we approved the budget last year? Do you not think you should have launched your study before you reduced your staff, and not after this tragedy?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's sounding like we only had four inspectors altogether. We have a number of gas inspectors all over the province, and it's to determine those boundaries where the inspectors can do their jobs efficiently and be able to cope with it and not reduce the safety for the people of Saskatchewan. And that's what we are wanting to do and sit down with our people to determine that, and whatever's needed or required, we will fill those positions.

Collapse of Floor in School Building

MR. LINGENFELTER: — A question to the Minister of Supply and Services, and it has to do with the lack of information coming from the government. It has to do with the accident which occurred in Regina on the Winnipeg Street location of the Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences. In April of last year the mezzanine floor of that building collapsed. Luckily no one was in the building at the time. But in the House, on April 25th, you promised this Assembly a complete report of that accident, as to why it happened, and measures that you would take, personally to see what had happened, and what measures were taken to see that it wouldn't happen again.

On June 13th I wrote you a letter requesting the same information, after the Assembly adjourned, and to date I still have not received, nor has any member of the Assembly received, any information on that matter. I wonder if the minister would take the time today to report to the Assembly on that particular accident, and what he has done to see that it doesn't happen again.

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I will give the undertaking to the hon. member from Shaunavon that I will have the report to him. As a matter of fact, I was under the impression that the hon. member from Shaunavon did receive that, after his letter of June the 13th. If that's not the case, I will apologize to the House, and I will be sure that the member from Shaunavon has that report in his hands before this day is over.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate the information coming to the opposition from the minister. I must say that in light of the fact that on January 1st of next month, 300-some-odd students will be in that building with teachers, that it's of a great deal of concern. And I would like the minister not only to get back to us in a letter, but to give us the report of the investigation that his department took on that matter — a complete investigation report that you promised us.

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't recall the exact details of the undertaking, and so on, and I won't necessarily assume that the allegation that the member from Shaunavon has made today is totally accurate, although I do recall the undertaking . . . I do recall the letter on June the 13th, as I've indicated. And I will certainly . . . And I'm also aware, and all members here are aware of the fact that that school will be occupied, and we're pleased that it will be occupied, and it will be safe. And I'll give the House that undertaking, that there is no question that the inspection and so on in the department, from our department, in terms of the way the construction has proceeded, has been good.

But, as I've said to you before, Mr. Speaker, I will be sure that the member from Shaunavon has the report of the particular accident, that he related to earlier, in his hands before this day is complete.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a supplement to the minister. I want, Mr. Minister, the report of the investigation that you promised me back on April 25th of this year, not a letter explaining what you perceive to have happened, but the report of the investigation that you promised to undertake last April in this Assembly. That is the report that I would want before day's end.

HON. MR. McLEOD: — That's what I have told the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, that I would provide before this day is over. It's not any perception on my part that I will be providing.

Wild Rice Industry in Northern Saskatchewan

MR. YEW: — I have a question for the Minister for Parks and Renewable Resources, and it deals with a great opportunity that the government has for creating jobs in the North, an opportunity which it seems determined to mess up, Mr. Speaker.

The government is now in the midst of renegotiating the rules governing the wild rice industry in northern Saskatchewan and the NAD (northern administration district). A number of changes — the PC government is proposing to increase the royalties in fees which wild rice growers pay for their product. As well, they intend to open up leases to southern corporate interests and big business. As well, they intend to alter the licensing and take away — pardon me — alter the licensing. The government proposes to take away the marketing of the produce from the growers, the people living in the northern administration district, and their wild rice industries, associations, and co-operatives.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is this: why have you decided to disrupt this important industry just when Northerners were on the verge of making it an important source of new jobs and revenue for northern people?

HON. MR. PICKERING: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member from Cumberland, we have approximately 200 wild rice producers in the North right now, and the majority of those are from northern Saskatchewan. The wild rice policy, as it relates to the whole province, is under review, and once that policy is in place, I will certainly be announcing it here in the legislature.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Oil Revenues — All-time High

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As residents of the province of Saskatchewan are well aware, this province has been experiencing an oil boom since the change in government, and following the introduction of the oil industry recovery program in 1982. The system of royalty relief has caused a dramatic upswing in activity in the province's oil patch and has promoted exploration in new areas.

So far in 1984, Mr. Speaker, more than 2,600 wells have been drilled in Saskatchewan, substantially surpassing the previous record of 1,843 wells drilled last year. This program has been directly responsible for more than 2,000 new jobs, and over a billion of investment in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON MR. SCHOENHALS: — As you know, Mr. Speaker, the province conducts quarterly sales of Crown petroleum and natural gas rights in the province, provides us with a firm indication of producer confidence in the oil industry. Today I'm pleased to announce that the revenue from sales conducted in 1984 will establish a new all-time record of \$123.7 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — The previous record was established in 1983. This has been made possible by the fourth quarter land sale this week which yielded revenues of \$37.6 million, the second highest single sale in 30 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — These are revenues, Mr. Speaker, that are gained by the province through a responsible approach to developing our resources. They substantially exceed any costs associated with the ongoing operation of the royalty program. Our program is cheaper and much more efficient than the incentives offered by the previous program which favoured the large multinational oil companies. Also, this revenue will assist us in maintaining government programs at a time when other sources, such as farm income tax, are obviously declining.

Mr. Speaker, the oil industry recovery program provides revenues for the province and, in turn, is

providing economic opportunities and jobs for residents of the province. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I will make a brief reply. The minister has indicated that there will be record revenue of \$123.7 million from land sales. We should all understand that these are not royalty revenues which come in each year while the resource lasts, but these are the sale of mineral interests, sales which can only be made once. It's the difference between getting wheat from your farm each year and selling off land. And this is a selling off of land so that we will not get this revenue again.

I remind the House that the Minister of Finance has frequently advised us that as soon as revenues from the oil industry rebounded, and as soon as the potash industry rebounded, then we would be able to balance our books. The Minister of Mineral Resources, of Energy and Mines, now tells us that the oil revenues are at an all-time high. I would like to think that the Minister of Finance will now be able to balance his books, but I suspect that our deficit for this current year will not be the \$260 million which he predicted, but will be closer to \$350 million, in spite of the fact that we're selling off our heritage, these one-time sales, as announced by the Minister of Energy and Mines.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 3 — An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill, An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act.

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

Bill No. 4 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Assessment Act

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill, An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Assessment Act.

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

Bill No. 5 — An Act to amend The Department of Urban Affairs Act

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill, An Act to amend The Department of Urban Affairs Act.

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

Bill No. 6 — An Act to amend The Public Health Act

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill, An Act to amend The Public Health Act.

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

MOTIONS

Referral of sessional paper No. 207 to the Standing Committee on Communications

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Before orders of the day, I move, seconded by the member for

Meadow Lake:

That the retention and disposal schedules approved by the public documents committee and tabled as sessional paper No. 207 of 1983-84, be referred to the Standing Committee on Communications.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — In the interest of expedience, I wonder if I might indicate to the House that questions nos. 1 to 7 inclusive will be answered today, and questions nos. 9 and 10 will also be answered today. Questions nos. 8, 11, 12, and 13 will be converted to notice of motion for returns.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Zazelenchuk, seconded by Mr. Tusa.

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege for me to take part in this throne speech this year. First of all, I'd like to congratulate both the mover and the seconder, the member for Riversdale and the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood, for moving and seconding this speech and getting us started on it.

I'm not surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the government was able to roll through 10 or more speakers a day on this throne speech. I suppose if I'd have to give it a name, Mr. Speaker, I'd say, there's so much more it could be. There's so much more it could be. And if there were a little more in the throne speech, possibly some of the members could find some room for debate and some of the government members would, in fact, have some need to discuss and talk about it.

There's only three topics today that I want to raise in this throne speech, Mr. Speaker. The first one I want to talk about — agriculture. The second topic I want to discuss for just a short while — the government's involvement in SCIC (Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation). And the third topic that I would like to raise today is the government's involvement in liquor advertising.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to look at agriculture. It's been my privilege for the past two and a half to three years to be the spokesman for our party for agriculture, and I've enjoyed the challenge and opportunity of meeting with farmers and farm organizations from around the province and listening to them and listening to their ideas. But, Mr. Speaker, I must confess that these past three years have also been very frustrating, not because of what the farmers are telling me, or that it's been so serious listening to the farmers, but because of what this government is doing and isn't doing.

Here's a government which promised so much to rural Saskatchewan in 1982, and yet a government that has delivered so little. Here's a government that has worked so hard to build the expectations of people right across the province. And what happened? Only to let the farmers down.

The Conservative ads used to brag that they were going to provide Saskatchewan with a premier that had a Canadian wheat book permit. I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has traded his book in for a little bit of PR and he's using his PR instead of his permit book. So far all we've gotten from him and from this government has been smoke in mirrors, not the down-to-earth common-sense politics which Saskatchewan farmers want and which Saskatchewan farmers need.

Eighteen months ago the farmers and my neighbours — and I'm sure farmers in your area, Mr. Speaker — got their hopes up when both the Premier and the Deputy Premier made statements in the House that the PC government would open up the provincial treasury for Saskatchewan's family farms. We're going to go to the wall for the farmers, was the former minister of agriculture's statement. Finally, the farmers said, we're going to get some cold cash out of the government.

But, Mr. Speaker, you know and I know and our neighbours know there was no cold cash. There was no money. The farmers are still waiting. And now it's not the government that's going to the wall for the farmers, it's the farmer that has his back to the wall. And this throne speech and the legislation and Bill 1 that the Minister of Agriculture has introduced indicates loudly and clearly in a public admission that the farmer's got his back to the wall. He's run out of rope.

In the meantime, what has this government done? What has the Conservative government done to the hundreds they found, Mr. Speaker — hundreds of millions of dollars to provide iron-clad loan guarantees to Husky Oil? And you notice I said iron-clad — loan guarantees that work for Husky Oil and for Manalta Coal and for the Bill Hunter's of this world. It's found more than \$300 million to give away since they've been elected to the oil companies, Mr. Speaker, in tax breaks and in royalty concessions.

But what has it done for the farmers of Saskatchewan? Peanuts. Peanuts for the farmer. In last spring's budget the big bragging point for the Premier was the farm operating loan guarantee program — \$4 million in the budget for the farmers, they said.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take some time today to put that in perspective. The PC government has come up with 203 times that amount for loan guarantees and tax gifts to out-of-province resource companies and resource corporations, but still so little for the farmer in last spring's budget.

What has been the result of your guaranteed loan operating program, Mr. Speaker? How has this program worked? And I'd like to have the Minister of Agriculture follow me and stand up today and brag about this wonderful operating loan guarantee program. Mr. Speaker, it's been a total disaster.

(1445)

The Conservatives' farm operating loan guarantee program has been laughed out of almost every financial institution in our province. Even the government's closest and dearest friends, the big banks, have said publicly that the PC loan guarantee isn't worth the paper it's written on. As a result, thousands of family farmers who saw a ray of hope for help, a ray of hope for help, a chance to get some operating money, a chance to get some money to put their crops in last spring, and that hope has been dashed and the family has been left completely disappointed.

I have here, Mr. Speaker, a copy of a guaranteed loan that the Royal Bank made to a farmer in my constituency. And this is a confirmation of credit facilities, it's entitled. The borrowers name (as the minister can see) has been cut out, and the description of the farmer's assets is involved.

The farmer owns one section of land and he rents one section of land. He has four children. He applied for the loan right after it was first announced last spring. He applied for it early. On

approximately July 1st he received this document, and this document was given to the farmer. And I wonder if the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture has received some of these documents, or copies of them, and knows what the farm loan guarantee program is all about? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, he says he doesn't, so let me fill in a few lines for him.

There's a priority on a repayment source of six priorities. The sixth one is "debt outstanding to other creditors." The other five relate directly to making payments to the Royal Bank on how the farm operates. By the way, the loan guarantee was for \$15,000.

I won't take the time today to read all the pages. But let me just put into the record what was expected of this farmer that has a section of land, rents a section of land, and what he had to put up for security for to get this \$15,000 of working capital.

1(a) General assignment under section 178 covering all grain registered under PPSA (Personal Properties Securities Act); (b) An unconditional guarantee from the program chairman of the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture Counselling and Assistance for Farmers Program, for the full amount of the guaranteed operating loan (\$15,000); 3(a) Registered chattel mortgage form 845, covering 1981 John Deere 20-foot press drill; (b) Specific assignment under section 178 covering a combine, general assignment under section 178 security covering all grain.

Let me explain to those members that don't know what a security 178 is, Mr. Speaker. A 178 security is a security under the federal Act that you include your land and your equipment under one chattel mortgage. You can't separate the two.

Do you remember the question we tried to get the Premier to answer yesterday when he wouldn't tell us what happens under your new program and your new Act where you're only backing the land? What happens to this farmer that has to group them under a 178? What happens, Mr. Speaker? Stand up, write it down, and stand up and tell us what's going to happen there.

Okay, the following is in addition to a previously negotiated security:

1. Assignments of crop and hail insurance; 2. Form 924, general security agreement; 3. Form 812, guaranteeing postponement of claim in the amount of (blank); dated; signed by Mrs. (and the name is blanked out); supported by form 85; send a letter of independent legal advice. Here she signs away her homestead rights, and signs that her homestead rights are signed away. And then the covenants, the positive and/or negative, it says here:

The borrower will not: (1) incur any capital expenditure; (2) make loans, invest in or guarantee loans in favour of others; (c) make payments to principal or interest to any other creditor without written consent of the Royal Bank.

And here's the clincher, Mr. Speaker. They've got all that security. They've got his combine, they've got all his other equipment, plus they've got a signature from him that he will not pay any other creditor but the Royal Bank first. Then he has to sign this agreement:

The borrower agrees to provide information for a full financial review once 1984 harvest results are in. If the operation is deemed unviable, the borrower agrees to list all land for sale at a reasonable value, prior to November 1, 1984.

When this constituent brought this form to me and asked whether he should sign it or not, that's why I've got the form. He didn't sign it. He wouldn't go for that kind of a loan guarantee program. You'd think if you make a loan guarantee program you'll guarantee the loan, not put the farmer's back to the wall and tell them, look mister, if your crop isn't going to cover this loan guarantee, you put your land up for sale and you sign on the dotted line.

That's the kind of loan guarantee you have, and if you think this is a rare example, I can give you other examples where you have agreements like this, and where I can show you where the land was sold at public auction, where the person put up his land for sale. They're not included in the foreclosures. They were forced into a foreclosure by your wonderful program.

How many people did you sign up in this loan guarantee program last spring, and I'll tell you how many people are in trouble, because this was the final straw that breaks the back of the farmers. This is a positive example of why your program was a total disaster. It just didn't work.

Then came the Premier's province-wise television speech a few weeks back and the throne speech a few days ago. Both of them promised a comprehensive plan to help farmers survive this difficult year. If this was something to brag about that you had last spring, I'm beginning to worry when you talk about a comprehensive plan. I'm beginning to worry. Because the farmers don't need more comprehensive plans like that. They don't need no more comprehensive plans like your guaranteed loan assurance program was.

The Premier said, "We will not let farmers be driven off their land." But what does he deliver? What does he deliver? Does the little Minister of Agriculture, does he stand up and does he introduce it to this legislation a comprehensive plan? Does any one of your people stand behind your little giant and thump your desk and cheer and say, "This is a comprehensive plan. We're willing to comprehensive plan to salvage the farms, and that's the comprehensive plan we're going to go with."

Well, I challenge you to call an election. I challenge you to call an election on that comprehensive plan because if you haven't got, if you haven't got some hard, cold cash, if you haven't got some dollars you don't have a comprehensive plan. Your plan doesn't have one thin dime for the farmers. All we have here is a band-aid Bill which pretends to provide family farmers with security against foreclosure for a 13-month period.

A number of things need to be said about this legislation, and I intend to take more time once second reading is introduced by the minister. But first of all, a foreclosure moratorium, and that's what your Bill is. It's foreclosure moratorium — is only one step in a comprehensive plan to help family farmers to survive. If you have a three-legged table, the foreclosure moratorium is only one leg. It will not stand alone.

And the second: the Conservative legislation doesn't even do an adequate job of that one step. That's the serious part of it. If it were . . . (inaudible) . . . if it were a solid foundation to build on and be part of a comprehensive package, it'd be great, but it isn't that. And let me explain these two points.

First, the foreclosure moratorium is just one step in the comprehensive plan to support the survival of family farms. Our caucus first proposed a debt moratorium in the form of the family farm protection Act in April of this year, eight months ago. Our legislation would have protected farmers for 18 months, and it would have protected the entire farm unit, equipment, livestock, and land. The government Bill deals only with this land payment. And it would have provided farmers with true protection with little red tape and not bankers' loopholes, unlike the PC legislation. But from the start, we proposed a debt moratorium as a breathing space for hard-pressed farmers, coupled with cash injection to help those farmers turn things around.

Last spring we proposed a 32 cent a gallon farm fuel rebate and an enriched and effective operating loan guarantee program. We suggested, make the loan guarantee program similar to Manitoba's program. But, no, the government decided not to do that. As the drought worsened we urged the Minister of Agriculture make an acreage payment, initiate an acreage payment. I think anybody in Saskatchewan would agree, anybody in Saskatchewan would agree that they prefer to be drowned out rather than blown away. I think the Minister of Agriculture agrees that a farmer with a lot of rain can accommodate the situation better than a man can that has no

water, no moisture at all. And yet, when we suggested that the government comes up with the same kind of deal, the same kind of deal as they did for the flooded farmers, nothing was forthcoming. Nothing was forthcoming.

Throughout, the moratorium has seen only one part of the package. To make the moratorium work, you had to get cash into the hands of farmers so that they'd have a chance to turn things around. This Conservative government has failed to do this. Bill 1 doesn't provide a dime for Saskatchewan farmers. Like this throne speech overall, it's an example of Conservative government's closing its eyes, crossing its fingers, and hoping for a miracle to bail them out.

What about my second point that this legislation doesn't even do an adequate job of providing temporary security for farmers? I say this because the legislation covers only a farmer's land. The Premier is quoted as saying that a farmer without his land is no longer a farmer. I suggest to you, a farmer without equipment, or a farmer without cattle, is only a real estate person; a farmer that only has land and hasn't got any equipment and hasn't got any cattle . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member from Shellbrook says he's still a farmer. I disagree with you. If you've only got land and you don't have equipment to farm it, you're not a farmer — you're not a farmer.

And I'm saying to you, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, a farmer needs a tractor. A farmer needs a tractor. If you're not doing the farming . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . no you aren't. You are pretending you are a farmer — a pretender.

A farmer without a tractor, a farmer without a swather, or a farmer without a combine is no longer a farmer. How are they to maintain a viable family farm if the banks are still allowed to walk in and seize his equipment or seize his livestock or stored grain or crop insurance cheques? That's just one example of this PC Bill. Mr. Speaker, this Bill has a loophole big enough to drag the main branch of the Royal Bank through.

Mr. Speaker, if this Bill would have covered equipment, they would have done the dealers a favour, and let me explain. The Premier in the question period refused to answer the question, "Where does a farmer get his money when he buys a tractor and finances it?" Does he get that money from the dealer, or does he get it from a finance company? If you go to a dealer, to a Case dealer, and you're buying a 2870, or whatever the number of the new tractors are today, and you're financing \$50,000 of that tractor, you don't get the money from the Case dealer. You don't get the money from the Case dealer. I submit that the finance company, either your bank or your credit union or a loan company or J.J. Case's finance company, puts up the money. Now the farmer guarantees and signs the loan if it's with J.J. Case. The dealer backs the farmer's loan with J.J. Case.

(1500)

If the member for Kelvington-Wadena has bought this big four-wheel drive tractor to grow his rice that he's always talking about, and he doesn't make his payments because the rice crops drowned out in his area, or blown away if it's mine, and that tractor needs to be repossessed, Mr. Speaker, the dealer has to pick up that tractor. The dealer has to pick it up as repossessed. The finance company takes and transfers the note, that the farmer was paying on, over to the dealer, and the dealer has to accept the note.

I talked to a Case dealer that repossessed six tractors in the last two weeks. Those six tractors cost him \$21,000 for the rest of this quarter for floor planning and financing them — \$21,000 he had to put up to finance those tractors. If this Bill were in place, J.J. Case would be stuck with those contracts, not the local dealer. J.J. Case would. But you fellows are more concerned about Case financing, and you're more concerned about the loan companies and the banks than you are about the dealers. If you'd had your dealers at heart, you would have included the dealers like you're doing the farmers with their land. If you'd have any conscience for the dealers of Saskatchewan, you would have included them so they could . . . (inaudible) . . .

But what's happened — what's happened? The farmer's tractor can be repossessed; it can be dumped on the back of the dealer, and you don't care if you see that dealer go under. Because you don't care about the dealer — you don't care about the dealer — and that's why you left that out, because you're more interested in the bank than you are in your friends that are in business.

Then there is the advice the Minister of Agriculture has been giving to farmers about this legislation — and this has really disturbed me — advice which I suggest could cost some farmers their land. If the farmers follow the Minister of Agriculture's advice on this legislation, I predict that all we're doing is postponing, and it's going to cost the farmers land.

The minister claims that this Bill will allow farmers to stop making payments on their land for 13 months, and to use the money for operating costs and other things. Mr. Speaker, if the minister would read his own legislation, he knows that that gives the banks grounds for repossession, and that gives them a wide-open loophole that they don't have to go through the normal channels. It speeds up the repossession process and makes it easier for repossession to take place than without it.

I urge the minister to read his own legislation. Section 10 allows a court to approve a foreclosure action by a bank or other financial institution if the farmer is not making a sincere and reasonable effort to meet his obligations under the mortgage. But by that definition, simply rejecting your land payments to other areas could easily be construed as a farmer not making a sincere and reasonable effort to meet his mortgage obligations.

If that becomes the case, farmers who accept the minister's advice could very well see their farms taken away, just like they are if they took \$15,000 on your other loan guarantee program. I urge farmers to move cautiously on their minister's word. Take a good look and make sure that you aren't going to be deceived.

There's another concern I have about the legislation, Mr. Speaker, and that is what I would actually call speeding up foreclosure of some farms. Can you believe it? Here we have moratorium legislation that will actually speed up the foreclosure process. This is not just saying this, Mr. Speaker, but even the government's dear friends at the big banks suggested it as they were quoted on TV. And I'd like to quote Jack Wright, the chairman of the Canadian Banking Association, and Mr. Wright says he has no objections to a third party like the farm land security board looking at the situation, and then odds are, in some cases, the board's findings will actually speed up the foreclosure process.

This comes from your friends, the bankers. And they're banking on, Mr. Speaker. Under this PC law, a bank can apply for a foreclosure, and, if it can prove certain things to the satisfaction of the judge, the farmer can have his land taken away quicker than he could before this Bill was passed.

Why do you suppose that's the case? Why do you suppose that's written into it, Mr. Speaker? Because this new law removes The Land Contracts (Actions) Act, which set strict rules as to how a bank can move on foreclosure.

These Bills and steps often take many, many months. But under this new law the bank simply has to convince a judge, or in this case a committee, and it can foreclose almost immediately. I will be debating it, Mr. Speaker, in detail during second reading.

Members opposite seem to resent me debating their number one Bill to save agriculture. Their number one Bill embarrasses them to debate it during the throne speech. We have here a foreclosure moratorium that speeds up the foreclosure process. I know it's hard to believe, but maybe not so hard when you know where it's coming from. You can expect anything from a Conservative government.

On every single promise that this government has made to farmers, this Conservative government has built up great expectation, and on every single issue and every single promise you've made to farmers, you've failed to deliver. It's disappointing. You've made my job frustrating. And I'm telling you, the farmers are going to have the last word — the farmers are going to have the last word.

They'd promised \$40 million in aid for flooded farmers in the north-east. The Premier stood up and said, "We're putting up 20 million; the federals are putting up 20 million." At best, they got seven and a half million. A \$40 million dollar promise, \$7.5 million delivery.

They promised great improvements to the beef stabilization plan. Farmers all across Saskatchewan are asking me how can they get out of the beef stabilization plan since the government has frustrated it. They took \$11 million out of the beef stabilization plan to pay for the feed assistance program.

They promised a comprehensive plan to maintain family farms, and they delivered a band-aid Bill.

That's why I say these past three years have been frustrating, Mr. Speaker. That's why I say Saskatchewan farmers are frustrated with this government. And it's why many farmers have their backs to the wall and are just counting the days till the next election. They are counting the days so they can throw these rascals out and put in a government that will deliver on the promises they made — a new Democratic Party government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — I would like to talk a little bit about SCIC (Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation) at this time, Mr. Speaker. First off, I want to congratulate the Premier on his speedy reaction to a letter that I wrote to him on December 4th. In that letter, I said to the Premier:

Dear Premier: — The people of Saskatchewan have been touched by the sight of starving children and adults in Africa . . .

And I suggested that because they've saved some money by their cuts in SCIC . . . I will paraphrase what I've said to him. You can get a copy of the letter from him if he cares to share it with you. But I outlined in my letter to the Premier that this government's performance in protecting the weak and the poor has indeed been very poor.

Funding cuts to the Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation have effectively removed almost \$2.5 million from SCIC's budget during the last two years.

SCIC has planned to use that money for development projects which would have helped many of these people become self-sufficient; \$150 would have purchased enough fishing nets to make 10 families that live on the coasts of Ethiopia self-sufficient — \$150; \$2,000 would have provided a well for a small community. Had the government chosen to provide this \$2.3 million as a direct food aid during the last two years, over 85,000 people would have been fed for an entire year. The food could have been in Ethiopia now, rather than sitting in elevators of Saskatchewan.

The reformation is great. I appreciated the Deputy Premier coming in and announcing the reformation. It's late, but I want to say publicly, it's welcome. I hope that this new-found concern for needy people is reflected in other policy changes. I suggest that the measure of your sincerity will be reflected, among other things, by how much money you're going to appropriate in your budget this coming year to SCIC (Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation), and that will be a measure of the reformation.

If there was increased funding, and if the funding is even brought back to the '81 level, let alone what it should be since inflation's in place, then I will know that the government has been sincere. And the sincerity will be measured by how you deal with the needy people right here at home.

The savage cuts to welfare recipients have caused food banks and soup kitchens to flourish. The first time in my memory, Mr. Speaker. The first time in my memory. But the senior friends of my family, they know of soup kitchens, and they know that that's happened in the past.

We believe that every man is his brother's keeper. We believe that the strong should bear the burdens of the weak and the hungry. We believe that any society, and most certainly a Christian society, must be measured by what it does, rather than by what it says it's going to do for the less fortunate.

Mr. Speaker, the other area that I have mentioned in every budget speech and every throne speech that I've participated in since the Conservative government has decided that they would open up advertising in Saskatchewan and have decided to move on a policy to become pushers of alcohol.

I'm speaking of your decision, and the decision of this government, to increase alcohol consumption in Saskatchewan. And that's the official position of the Conservative Party — to increase consumption of alcohol. The most direct, and the most obvious way that your government is implementing this policy is by allowing alcohol advertising in the Saskatchewan media.

Just over a year ago, without the tradition of an all-party committee to review the law, without the traditional public hearings to hear opposing views of the law, and here's the clincher — without the tradition of a free vote in this legislature — you broke the traditions of that.

This legislation and this Chamber has always been respected by a government, even during the days of Ross Thatcher, that there would be a free vote on moral issues. You decided to break them. You decided to break that tradition in this Legislative Assembly. And the Devine cabinet, behind closed doors, lifted a 58-year ban on alcohol advertising in this province.

And I know from reading a little blueprint that's called "Building for Tomorrow — Resolutions" that not all the people in the Conservative Party agree with that move, not all the people in Saskatchewan agree with that move of lifting a 58-year old ban.

A year ago in this House I commented on how inconsistent that decision of your government was to claim that it cared about family violence, that they cared about drinking and driving and all the related social problems. Quite obviously alcohol advertising has one purpose, and one purpose only. There's only one purpose to advertise. and that's to increase consumption.

Every major study that's been conducted in North America indicates that an increased alcohol consumption comes from increased alcohol advertising. The latest study which draws a link between alcohol advertising and increased alcohol consumption comes from Cleveland State University, and as was reported in the Leader Post on Monday, November the 26th:

Cleveland: — The more that adolescents see alcohol advertising featuring "cool fun and carefree" drinkers, the more liquor they seem to consume, a researcher says. "The evidence indicates it's likely that advertising stimulates consumption levels, which in turn leads to heavy drinking and to drinking in hazardous situations," said Kimberly Neuendorf, assistant professor of communication at Cleveland State University.

Neuendorf examined drinking attitudes and habits in relation to exposure to alcohol

advertising among 1,227 people, generally in the ages of 12 to 22.

"In all cases, those exposed to more advertising reported drinking more and thought it safer to drink in sports or driving-type situations than those in the low-exposure groups. The ads tend to perpetuate and reinforce "the image of a cool, fun and carefree drinker," she said.

Another finding of the study was that (listen to the number) 79 per cent of all subjects believed the ads' basic message was an appeal for an excessive consumption . . .

An appeal for an excessive consumption. As I said before, Mr. Speaker, every major study shows that, and with increased alcohol consumption comes increased alcohol abuse.

The latest study shows that. It draws a direct link between alcohol advertising and increased consumption. I hope the Conservative government members take note of that study as is reported in the 26th issue of the Leader Post. That's just the latest study which confirms that alcohol advertising leads to increased consumption, and that young people are particularly vulnerable to such advertising. So there can be no doubt about it. And there can be no doubt, as well, that increased alcohol consumption is not good for society as a whole.

(1515)

Alcohol abuse is responsible for many of our most serious social problems. Alcohol is a major factor in family violence, something which this government claims that it is concerned about. Over 55 per cent of all wife batterings, 65 per cent of all child abuse cases, are alcohol related. Over 10 times as many work days are lost due to alcohol than are lost due to strikes.

What about drinking and driving? What about drinking and driving? The PC government claims that it is determined to come down hard on drinking and driving, yet its official policy is one of encouraging increased alcohol consumption — this when 50 per cent of all traffic fatalities involve alcohol.

What about government spending? The Conservative government claims that it is concerned about the cost of government, yet the government has adopted a policy of pushing alcohol when 25 per cent of the Canadian health dollar is spent on alcohol-related problems. Alcohol is Canada's number one drug problem. The Conservative government is worsening that problem by opening up the flood gates to alcohol advertising.

Why? Why? The reason is simple, Mr. Speaker. This decision was a straight repayment of a campaign debt. The major breweries and the big out-of-town media corporations had to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars . . . (inaudible) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. Order, please! I would advise the member for Regina Centre that he must wear his jacket in the House.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I was talking about the amounts of thousands of dollars that the Conservative Party has over the years received from the major breweries and the media corporations, and the Conservative Party has given them their reward. That's what the decision was all about.

The Conservative government members may think the Saskatchewan public doesn't know that. Well, you're wrong. You're wrong. I bring to the attention of the members a letter from a pastor. I bring to you a letter from a pastor. I hope I brought it along. Here we are.

Lashburn Community Church, dated October 18th, and it was addressed to the Premier. It's a

lengthy letter, but I want to bring just a couple of sentences to the members of the Conservatives.

Dear Premier Devine, In respect to an editorial in the Lloydminster Times on October 16, I know I must also be in personal contact with your office. Yet, in so doing, I acknowledge that this effort is entirely in vain . . . (and here's the quote) . . . for you have truly sold the soul of Saskatchewan for a handful of liquor profits.

This is what the minister from Lashburn says. "You have sold the soul of Saskatchewan for a handful of liquor profits." I'm not going to read all this damning information that he writes in here, and that's exactly what it does. But I want to read the two closing paragraphs, Mr. Speaker.

Premier Devine, the editorial headline announces that beer ads are paying off. (Beer ads are paying off, and he sends a copy of it along with his letter. Beer ads are paying off.) Just remember one thing. Just remember one thing, my friends from the Conservative Party. Breweries do not win elections. I, like oh so many other Saskatchewanites, switched our votes to the Conservatives the last time, and it has now proven to be just that — the last time.

And those members that are sitting here and thinking that's great, they've got some votes, but if you only won with 40 or less, I'd suggest you don't waste your time sitting in this House, and you get home and start campaigning, because the damning things that this government is doing will indicate that you're in serious trouble. And they think this is a laughing matter. They think this is a laughing matter.

And he finished this letter by saying:

It is one of my most regrettable acts to have been a part in favour of your election to office. Graham K. Lough, Pastor of the Lashburn Church.

If I may just interrupt, Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome back home to Saskatchewan, a member that I used to enjoy . . .

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Send a welcome to Senator Davey Steuart. When he was sitting over here as leader of the Liberal Party — for those members, he was sitting over here — and he was leader of the Liberal Party when I first sat across from him. And he was being accused of sitting on the fence, Mr. Speaker, with his ear to the ground and he did that pantomime right off that chair. And I want to compliment the member; he was a good actor. He didn't quite bring the party together the way he should have, but if you were around now, I can assure you that those people wouldn't be sitting over here. You'd be back here 15 or 17 strong.

Mr. Speaker, before I changed the tone to introduce a great senator and one that, during their whole term as a right-wing government, never introduced liquor advertising, and I compliment him for that. The pressure must have been just as hard on him and his government at the time they were sitting in those benches, but they didn't succumb to liquor advertising.

This decision has been a straight repayment of a campaign debt. The major breweries, and the big out-of-province media corporations have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars, and they got their reward.

Now the PC government likes to talk about how its policies are mainstreamed, that they are common sense, they are policies which has the support of the public on the alcohol advertising issue, Mr. Speaker. No doubt you will claim that. No doubt the government will brand those who oppose this decision as radicals.

Who are these radicals who will oppose the Conservative government's pushing alcohol through the media? Let me just list a few to you, Mr. Speaker, the so-called radicals who were on public record in opposition to alcohol advertising. They include, number one: the Canadian Medical Association; number two, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; number three, the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association — they're opposed to it; the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities; the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour; the Saskatchewan Catholic Womens' League; the Saskatchewan Alcoholism Commission; the Mennonite Central Committee; the Saskatchewan Conference of the United Church of Canada; the Regina Council of Women; and the Saskatoon Council of Women; are just to name a few that are on public record opposing this move.

These are the radicals that your government is talking about that are opposed to it. Approximately 500 members of the clergy from all over Saskatchewan, who have written me directly over the past year to go on record in opposition to this decision, and approximately 12,000 radical families have written to the Premier in opposition to this decision. I know, because copies of each letter came to our office and the Leader of the Opposition has spent many, many hours answering them. Mr. Speaker, these so-called radical groups of individuals oppose the Conservative government's policy.

Who else is on record in opposition to this decision? Well, the member of Rosthern might be in trouble because of his Conservative association for one. The Saskatoon Mayfair Constituency Association is in opposition. Saskatoon South is in opposition. All these PC organizations have submitted resolutions, submitted resolutions, and I could take the time to read them — submitted resolutions saying they are opposed to alcohol advertising. The delegates of the PC convention may well have opposed the government's policy too, but the public will never know because that is one party who doesn't vote on its convention resolutions in public, if you can believe it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a decision which should be reversed. It's a decision that should be reversed. If Saskatchewan-based media need more money, and they shouldn't, considering all the government's ads you're running, then at least be consistent and replace the revenue they now get from alcohol ads with a new updated aware program to prevent alcohol abuse. In the long-term, such a decision would be one of much greater benefit to the people of Saskatchewan than almost any other decision this government might make. And I challenge members opposite to make that decision.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I submit that the Conservative government has given us a throne speech which doesn't address the key problems facing our families in facing their problems, unemployment, and the crisis in agriculture, and which ignores many of the important opportunities we enjoy for growth and widespread prosperity — prosperity not only in an economic sense, but also in a social and spiritual sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Because a society which does a good job of taking care of its less fortunate is a better society and a stronger society, and a richer society for all of us. Let me repeat that. If you don't do a good job of taking care of the less fortunate, we'll be worse off and weaker because we ignore them.

I say with a heavy heart, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this is not the kind of society that your government is moulding in Saskatchewan today. That's not the kind of society you're moulding. Instead we are seeing a government which encourages the law of the jungle — survival of the fittest, shoring up success. That's your message. And let those unable to keep up fall by the wayside, unattended.

A Conservative government is trying to convince Saskatchewan people that greed is enough and that compassion has no place. I say that's wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's wrong. And it's why I was especially upset with the Premier's television extravaganza the other night in which he

claimed that the PC Party was the only political party to understand and to support fundamental values like family, faith, love, and compassion. He bragged and said, "We're the only party that understand those virtues. We're the only party."

Anyone who has followed the news in recent months or has heard the debates over things like this government's cut in assistance to the less fortunate, knows that this PC government and this PC Party hold no monopoly on virtue or support for fundamental values. I found the Premier's suggestions in very bad taste. I found them in very bad taste.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, God is not a New Democrat, and he's certainly not a Tory. For any party to politically self-righteously claim that God is on their side in partisan political debates is not only distasteful, but dangerous to the kind of pluralistic society we now enjoy. It smacks of the kinds of tactics which has been used by the religious new right in the United States in recent years, and which in my view have hurt the political process of that nation.

I suggest that the goal of political parties should not be to talk about fundamental values but put those fundamental values into practice — to display your support for values like faith, the family, love, and compassion through their deeds, on a daily basis. That's how I propose to judge your government; that's how I propose to judge your government, and it's on record and not on some speech by the Premier.

I do not assume that their actions are inherently evil or ungodly, simply because I don't support your political philosophy. I ask only that they grant me the same courtesy, even though they do not yet believe in mine. I will not question the motives or the beliefs of other members. Instead, I will question their actions and whether or not those actions live up to the fundamental values which I assume everybody in our society supports.

Again, I ask only members of this Conservative Party start to judge others in the same way. Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Deputy Speaker I guess it is now, I've talked about how your government's actions have been harmful to farmers, how they've been harmful to young families, and how they've been harmful to those in needs. I believe the government's actions have failed to display support for the fundamental values of faith, of the family, and love and compassion.

I want to remind all members and all Saskatchewan people watching and who are listening today that those remarks are going to go unchallenged. I want all members to think about that message, Mr. Speaker.

And now, because the throne speech fails to address the serious problems facing Saskatchewan and its people, and because this throne speech ignores the many important opportunities which our province has for growth and widespread prosperity. I wish to move an amendment to the motion now before this House. And I move, seconded by the my colleague, the member for Cumberland:

That the motion be amended by adding the following after the word "session" which appears in the final line:

But regrets that, notwithstanding the fact unemployment and the crisis in agriculture are the two major problems facing Saskatchewan people today, the legislative plan for the fourth session of the Twentieth Legislature: fails to provide concrete proposals to help Saskatchewan's unemployed find work this winter; fails to provide an adequate plan to deal with the crisis in agriculture and to assure the survival of Saskatchewan's family farms; fails to deal with the plight of those in real need such as the disadvantaged people of northern Saskatchewan and the working poor, the senior citizens, and the injured workers; it fails to recognize important opportunities for economic growth such as a properly financed education system, and an improved transportation network, and in a renewed dedication to the protection of

our environment; fails to recognize that tax and other concessions to large corporations from outside Saskatchewan do not create the widespread prosperity promised Saskatchewan people.

I, therefore, move this amendment, Mr. Speaker, and I cannot support the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Debate continues.

(1530)

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me considerable pleasure to rise in the House today and take part in this throne speech debate. I can assure you that I will be speaking in favour of the motion, and most definitely speaking against the amendment.

I believe that the Speech from the Throne provides a clear focus to our ongoing commitment to such key areas as job creation, economic development, and agriculture.

Before I get into the portion of my speech that deals with the cabinet responsibilities that have been entrusted to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to say a couple of words about my constituency of Saskatoon Sutherland, which I'm very proud to represent in this legislature.

As people familiar with Saskatoon will know, the constituency of Sutherland is located very close to the university and, in fact, many of my constituents are part of the university community. I'm sure that they will have been very interested in the comments made by my colleague, the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, yesterday when he clarified the record a great deal and straightened out many of the innuendoes and half-truths that have been perpetrated on the campus in Saskatoon by the Leader of the Opposition.

As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my constituency is the high tech centre, I believe, of the province, it's safe to say. I'm sure that many people in Sutherland who benefit from the opportunities created by this thriving, expanding, and new industry would have been very interested in the comments of the Minister of Science and Technology yesterday when he talked about the many successes that have taken place in Saskatchewan in that area.

As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, besides a substantial residential expansion in Saskatoon Sutherland and the north-east part of Saskatoon, there has been considerable expansion in the small-business area, and I'm sure that the Minister of Small Business and Tourism will have some points to make that those people will find of considerable interest.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's safe to say that my cabinet responsibilities have allowed me to witness and, in fact, participate in some of the most exciting initiatives that have ever been launched by a Saskatchewan government, and I would like to cite some of those examples for you this afternoon.

First of all, I would like to talk for a moment or two about the innovative approach we have taken in dealing with one of our most vital resources, and of course that is the resource of water. I believe that the proper management of this very vital resource is extremely important because it's something that affects each and every person in this province on a daily basis.

In 1982 when this government came to office, the responsibilities for water management in government were handled by a wide range of departments, agencies, corporations. At last count there were somewhat in excess of 30 different agencies that were involved in water management in the province of Saskatchewan.

The result of this approach was mass confusion on the part of the public, a definite lack of focus on the part of the government, a focus that was definitely needed.

I don't believe that the previous administration can be blamed for that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They . . . something that evolved and it was really something they couldn't control. I do, however, think they should be chastised for the fact that, despite overwhelming evidence that water management issues needed to be addressed, our predecessors failed to take any positive action.

Despite the complaints of urban and rural municipalities, of farmers, of their own employees, and of the public at large, the former government was content to maintain the status quo. Could it be that they were, in fact, simply devoid of ideas, or were they just lacking the political will to make the changes that were so obviously needed?

What was badly needed was an agency that would provide some perceptive, sensitive, and consistent responses to the needs of Saskatchewan water users. On July 1st of this year, 1984, the management of this vital resource was placed in the hands of one central body, the Saskatchewan Water Corporation. It is a first of its kind in this country and is a model that I'm sure other provinces will tend to look at as years go by.

Creation of the water corporation illustrates our commitment to addressing the issues at hand, and is evidence of a government that looks beyond the short-term problems. The corporation is currently operating from a series of six regional offices throughout the province. By the fall of 1985, this water corporation will be headquartered in Moose Jaw.

We have established a system of local advisory boards, and the six watershed districts, to better determine the needs and aspirations of the people within these regions. Because local residents bring a valuable perspective and a commitment to their area, representatives of local interest groups and the general public will sit on these boards. With our stronger regional presence, we also hope that more of the serious water problems can be resolved locally by corporation staff with the assistance of local boards.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Saskatchewan Water Corporation has acted very quickly to begin fulfilling its mandate. For example, in 1984, the corporation developed four programs to help farmers deal with water shortages that were brought on by the serious drought.

The four programs were the water well test drilling program, the deep well assistance program, community wells program, and the emergency dug-out pumping program. I'm proud to report to the Assembly that approximately 1,000 wells and small reservoirs were filled with our help in 1984.

In addition, approval has been granted for approximately 500 test drilling wells. I'm pleased that the province now has in place an efficient vehicle for the proper management of this most vital resource. As well, we have created an effective voice for Saskatchewan in the growing dialogue that takes place between provinces, and, in fact, crosses at times international boundaries.

There are comments in the throne speech dealing with the intentions of the water corporation, some of the thrusts that will be announced during this session. I'm sure all members of the Assembly look forward to those with keen anticipation.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn now to the Department of Energy and Mines, and deal with two or three of the sectors that we are responsible for. First of all, just a brief overview of what has been happening in the mineral sector. As most members are aware, two years ago the mining sector in Saskatchewan was severely constrained by a government that was devoted to interfering with industry. The now defunct, back-in provisions allowed the government to acquire an after-the-fact 50 per cent interest in any working property and thus become involved in all facets

of the mineral industry in the province of Saskatchewan. Very early in our term of office we eliminated those back-in regulations to restore confidence in Saskatchewan and to promote investment.

As a further step in the most recent budget, we introduced a mineral industry recovery program that was designed to stimulate increased activity for base and precious metals. As a result, activity since 1982 has more than doubled, with expenditures in northern Saskatchewan of \$10.4 million in exploration activities in 1984. Gold has been the focal point of this activity and, as a result, there is a tremendous interest in prospective gold-producing areas near Flin Flon and, in fact, in the La Ronge area, immediately north and east of La Ronge. I think it's safe to say, Mr. Speaker, that in the next 12 to 18 months we will see possibly two or even three producing gold mines in this province.

In the area of potash in 1975 the NDP sent a very clear message to investors with its intrusion into the potash industry. Companies that survived the take-over were left in a long, extended period of uncertainty with a government that was determined to call all the shots at any expense. This government has moved to restore industry confidence in Saskatchewan by removing the threat of expropriation. Canpotex has been retained and in effect strengthened as the offshore marketing agency for Saskatchewan potash. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, its head office will be located in Saskatoon in early 1985 and that will create employment for 18 people in that office.

This new spirit of trust, combined with improved markets, has caused potash companies to look most favourably on expansion. Kalium Chemicals is currently expanding its mine just west of Regina at a cost of \$100 million. Approximately 280 workers are being employed during the two-year construction period. Expansions at three other mining operations are now under consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn now for a moment or two to the uranium sector. As a government we are deeply concerned about the safe and orderly development of the uranium industry in the province. We have adopted a strong marketing effort to strengthen the viability of this sector. Our government believes that a strong uranium industry can contribute significantly to the economic well-being of Saskatchewan and, in particular, provide many opportunities for the residents of northern Saskatchewan. This is a view which is evidently not shared by the members opposite. I'm sure their complete about-face on the uranium issue is something that is known by many but understood by few.

At the recent convention of the Saskatchewan NDP they indicated that a re-elected NDP government will stop further expansion of uranium mining in Saskatchewan and phase out existing uranium contracts. Mr. Speaker, that means that after injecting \$600 million into the uranium industry in this province, taxpayers' dollars, the NDP says it will shut the industry down. In the next breath they will stand in this House and rail about job creation while what they are obviously advocating is the greatest job destruction program in the history of the province.

But, Mr. Speaker, these deep thinkers do have a response for that. Further in the resolution it says that uranium mine workers who do not find work in forestry or alternative mining operations in northern Saskatchewan will be assured jobs with either PCS or Saskoil.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if there is any determination that as they spend taxpayers' money in those areas whether, in fact, those jobs are needed or if that is simply a cover-up.

(1545)

It seems that, Mr. Speaker, this party opposite that initiated the uranium development in the province is now introducing thoughts that are a considerable distance from rational. The NDP is obviously being ruled by a body of radical opinion with no regard for the province's investment,

not to mention the lost jobs and economic opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, having talked about the mineral sector very briefly, I would like to turn to the prospects for natural gas in this province. Again in 1982 the natural gas industry, for all intents and purposes, did not exist in the province. In 1982 there were nine natural gas wells drilled in the province in the entire year, nine wells. Mr. Deputy Speaker — that, despite a vast pool of known reserves. The problem, of course, was the policy of our predecessors which, simply stated, was to buy two-thirds of our natural gas needs from Alberta at prices that were well above what was paid to Saskatchewan producers.

I recently had the opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to take part in not one but two gas field openings in the Hatton Field in the south-western part of the province, and one of these fields, the one that was opened by Precambrian Resources which is a junior resource company, the president of that company is Ted Renner. Like many other people I meet in the industry, he's a Saskatchewan native, born and raised in Yorkton, educated at the University of Saskatchewan, forced to go to Calgary in order to make a living. Mr. Renner, in his address to a packed hall at Fox Valley, drew an analogy between the policies of the previous administration, the agricultural sector. And I'd like to share that with the Assembly today, and I quote:

Well over half of Saskatchewan's natural gas needs were supplied by Alberta.

He's of course referring to the policies of the previous administration.

The government of the day pursued a policy which retarded the development of Saskatchewan natural gas industry by buying gas from Alberta in preference to Saskatchewan gas, and by paying substantially less for Saskatchewan gas production than the price paid for Alberta gas. The reason for this policy was to save Saskatchewan gas for some future emergency at some unforeseen time in the future. However, all that was accomplished was that my generation of Saskatchewan residents had to go elsewhere to find jobs in our industry. This previous government policy towards natural gas is the same as the policy that would advocate that we buy half of the wheat used in Saskatchewan at \$3 per bushel from the United States, while paying Saskatchewan farmers \$1 per bushel for the other half of Saskatchewan's needs, and then not allowing any Saskatchewan farmer to sell any additional wheat outside the province.

He concludes by saying:

If you think that's good policy, I have a brand new Edsel to sell you.

Mr. Speaker, that is the type of policy that was in place under the previous administration. I think the analogy to the agricultural sector indicates very clearly what happened. The result of the approach was that we had no industry in this province, no market, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also had an outflow, an outflow of \$1 billion in gas payments over the last decade. I venture to say that that billion would have been much better invested in creating jobs and economic opportunities in the province of Saskatchewan.

In 1983 we instituted a responsible natural gas policy in the province designed to offer a fair return and to create a market for the province's producers. Earlier this year we completed back-out agreements that will lessen our dependence on Alberta gas. The back-outs have provided Saskatchewan producers with a market and have stimulated activity in the Hatton Field near Fox Valley and Richmond. By 1988 we will double Saskatchewan production and move to a level of two-thirds self-sufficiency. By 1992, when the Alberta contracts expire, we should be in a position to completely serve our own needs. The policies we have instituted to date have caused a drilling boom in the province. More than 400 natural gas wells have been drilled in 1984 and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I remind you that that compares to nine that were drilled in 1982.

Very soon, as well, I will be announcing further steps to help develop the gas industry in the province, but the results so far indicate that the future is indeed bright.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn very briefly to the oil industry in the province of Saskatchewan. I think what has happened in the oil industry has been well documented. I will briefly go through what has happened for the benefit of the member from Quill Lakes who has trouble remembering what's been going on. In 1982 when we came to power we inherited an oil and gas industry that was virtually standing still. The policies of our predecessors stifled development and investment dollars and jobs were going elsewhere.

In the summer of 1982 a comprehensive oil industry recovery program was introduced, which put the oil patch back to work. The program featured as its focal point a one-year royalty tax holiday on new wells, providing an immediate stimulus and, in fact, a reason to invest in Saskatchewan.

The oil industry program caused an immediate turn-around in the oil patch and put literally thousands of Saskatchewan residents back to work. In 1983 we set a record for drilling by drilling 1,843 wells. So far in 1984 we have drilled more than 2,600 wells. This is a tripling of the activity that was taking place in 1981.

The program has meant jobs and economic opportunities in Saskatchewan. Approximately 2,500 jobs are directly attributable to the program instituted in the oil patch, as well as a billion dollars of investment in the province.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we have had over 250 new oil and gas companies start up business in the province of Saskatchewan, most of them small, junior resource companies, many of them local. I'm sure the member from Shaunavon is familiar with the trials and tribulations of the oil industry.

We have also had in excess of 90 service and consulting companies open up business in the province of Saskatchewan over that same period.

Provincial coffers have been net benefactors by in excess of \$185 million. As well, Mr. Speaker, an important point that is not often mentioned: in 1984 alone \$44 million in surface lease payments will be paid to the farmers of Saskatchewan. If you trap the activity in the oil patch you will find a large part of it very closely approximates the hardest hit drought areas. I'm sure the farmers in those areas are very grateful for the \$44 million that they received this year in surface lease payments.

As well, Mr. Speaker, there have been announcements and activities with two upgrader projects under way. Those two projects will result in \$4 billion of investment in the province, as has been said, in fact the largest job creation programs in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have all this activity. We have this development. We have jobs. We have investment. And what do our friends in the party opposite have to say? They rail daily against the program. They indicate they would have none of it. They say the reasons for the problems in 1981 and 1982 were not of their making. They were totally the fault of the Liberal government's national energy program. They term our program a give-away.

We can only assume, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if ever that party again become the decision makers in this province they will return to the fiscal program that was in place when they left power. The same party that would institute that type of policy will stand in this House and again argue about job creation and argue our lack thereof. By the same token, the policies they advocate would immediately put 2,400 on the street who are now employed as a direct result of this program.

We would be back to the days of DCAP program. I'm sure people who were in the House, and certainly people in the oil-producing areas, remember the DCAP program, the disruptive circumstances assistance program which the NDP literally paid people in the servicing industry not to work. That's the period when normal three-man crews suddenly became four-man crews. The program was — they had so much pride in it that rather than run it out of the Department of Energy at the time they ran it out of their small-business industrial development department.

We can only assume, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if ever that party again become the decision makers in this province, . . . Mr. Speaker, I don't think the people of the province want a return to those days. But, of course, the fact that the NDP make these statements that would lead to losses of jobs are justified because they're a party of high principles. They would indicate that they are the social conscience of the nation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It would seem obvious then that a party which had such high principles, such dedication to high moral values, would be very united, would have policies in place that were very consistent on any issue as important to the people of Canada as the energy question. But yet, when we look at the situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have the Saskatchewan NDP advocating a return to onerous royalty and taxation position, blaming the problems, as I indicated, of '81 and '82, on the national energy policy brought in by the federal Liberal government.

In the recent federal election campaign though, while the Mulroney Conservatives and in fact even the Turner Liberals were advocating overhaul of the program and major changes, only the Broadbent NDP government came out in support of the national energy policy. It seems to me there's a considerable amount of inconsistency in those two positions.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about inconsistencies, that was roughly the same time the Saskatchewan NDP party were having their convention here in Regina and debating what to do in the resource sector and advocating a return to what they term reasonable royalty rates. The NDP in Alberta were also having a convention. An article out of the Calgary Herald on November 24th '84 indicates that some interesting developments came out of that convention, and I would quote simply from three paragraphs:

The news media missed the most significant development at the recent NDP convention. The NDP is now far more pro free enterprise regarding the petroleum industry than the Conservatives. According to the NDP, there will be no royalties on new oil and gas wells until the investor gets his money back. A simpler royalty system will devise, and PGRT (petroleum gas revenue tax) will be removed.

How the provincial NDP are going to remove a federal tax, I'm not quite sure. And further on it says:

Under the NDP scheme the taxpayer would eventually recover more out of the petroleum industry than is the case now, because the royalties would be stiff after the investor recovered his seed money. The basic idea is to get as much as possible for the taxpayer out of the industry, but only after profits.

Mr. Speaker, we have here three different arms of the NDP party with three diametrically opposed positions on the development of the energy industry in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, can it be that the NDP are really only political opportunists? Could it be that they are a party without any principles, with no consistent positions on key issues? A party, in fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whose only aim is to grab power, and one that will exploit any issue in that attempt if they see political opportunity in it?

Mr. Speaker, I might suggest that the questioning of the Leader of the Opposition two weeks ago in this House would suggest that this is, in fact, the case. I would like to suggest to the people of

the province that they consider what the NDP does stand for and what would happen if, in fact, they ever did again return to a position of decision-making in this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have reviewed the activities in the Department of Energy and Mines, and what has been happening recently in the various sectors. I believe that we have established a base from which this province can experience considerable growth and considerable economic activity.

I believe that a blueprint for that expansion and that development that will benefit the people of this province was laid out in the throne speech. And therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be supporting the motion and voting against the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HOPFNER: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to also join in this throne debate. I have heard a lot of bunk coming across the floor in the last couple of days from the members of the opposition, and I happen to have gone back to when I first took office as an MLA for the Cut Knife-Lloydminster constituency.

And I went back to my filing cabinet and I pulled out a copy of my maiden speech, my first speech, to the legislature. And in that speech I had indicated at that particular time of many issues that were of concern in my constituency. I look back now on the past two and a half years, going into the third year, and I see such a great adjustment had taken place over that short period of time.

I'd just like to put it on record again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I said. And I know the time isn't allowable for me to carry on because we could be here for quite some time. But I'd like to indicate to you in regards to some of the major areas on which we have moved as a government to the betterment of Saskatchewan.

(1600)

I started out in maiden speech by congratulating the Premier on a choice of cabinet that he brought to the province of Saskatchewan. And I still say today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that choice has not disappointed me. I would like to suggest that these ministers have worked diligently to bring about many changes that have allowed Saskatchewan residents to prosper.

When I first considered running as a Conservative member, I felt that there was a real betrayal by the previous administration, the NDP government. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat, as I said in my maiden speech, that that never made me work as hard as I've ever had before. We've been led down the garden path by the NDP. They built false hopes; they're painted unrealistic pictures. They did everything to buy power in the province of Saskatchewan by throwing an unreal threat, and this brought about a fear within the people out in our particular ridings, thinking that, gee, maybe there isn't anyone else that could handle the problems in this province other than themselves.

But the people weren't fooled. They brought in a new government, and this government, upon many of the promises we've made, we've kept. And it relates back to Premier Grant Devine's phrase, "There's so much more we can be." And that phrase has come home to roost, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are just that much more, and we're going to be just that much more tomorrow, and the day after, and the day after.

I want to reiterate some of the words that the Leader of the Opposition had spoken today after the Minister of Energy, the Hon. Paul Schoenhals had made during his statement, his ministerial statement, "selling off land and selling off our heritage." Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if anybody is to be condemned for selling off land and selling off our heritage, it's the members of the

opposition, it's the NDP that should be the people looked at in this province.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the land was taken from the private individual, was boughten up. Now if you turn that scenario, that is no worse — that is no worse by Big Brother, big government, taking all this land out of the hands of these private individual farmers, and putting it in their own little enterprise of their own, and stating: who in the heck is going to farm this doggone stuff?

We are being accused of that in the oil industry. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me tell you something. We've had more oil companies come back to this province of Saskatchewan, small and large. We sell off these lands so that they can go out and they can drill, which creates jobs, which brings back our real heritage — our young people. That was the promise that we made in the '82 election, was that we are going to bring our young people back home close to their heritage.

Well, Saskatchewan for the first time hit a population of a million, and is growing — the first time in the province's history. We are creating more jobs in this province than anywhere else across this country — anywhere else. We still maintain the lowest unemployment across this country. I don't think for one moment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people in the province of Saskatchewan are condemning us for not having a zero unemployment, not one minute.

I don't think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the province of Saskatchewan alone can eliminate the unemployment problem in this country. We are working and doing our part to eliminate that situation, and Mr. Deputy Speaker, the more jobs we create, the more people we draw into this province. It's our friends and neighbours that we've had years ago that had moved out. It's people's children coming back. And that's the heritage — that's the point I wanted to make in that regard.

I wanted to go into a little bit of the segment of agriculture, the distress that agriculture faces today. Members opposite stand up and say, well, we haven't done enough. Well, Bill 1 that has been tabled in this legislature to help eliminate some of the problems some of our farmers face today that are in a distressed situation. But the member opposite just hands in an amendment to the fact that this government has not acknowledged it.

I want to suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the farmers out there realize that we are doing as good a job as can be done in the circumstances and the economic circumstances that this province faces and indeed, the country.

In regards to my particular constituency, I must say that I thank the good Lord above. because we've had an abundance of rainfall that could carry crops. We've had good abundance of grasslands for the cattle. We've got oil. So my particular part of the province has not suffered the devastation that other parts have. And I for one here, as a member, take my hat off to the people that have tried to struggle through these hard times. And in all sincerity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel we took the right direction.

In 1982, after taking office, we brought along a tax holiday, a new royalty structure for the province. We inherited an oil and gas industry that was virtually standing still. I can remember when I first moved to my constituency, that we enjoyed maybe about four or five months of a fairly busy time.

But the bottom fell out. The NDP's anti-development mentality, combined with the Liberal's ill-conceived national energy program, had driven millions of investment dollars away from Saskatchewan. If you wanted to see devastation, there it was. People were trying to grab in all different directions to survive this economic downturn. Jobs, literally thousands of jobs, were lost. Drilling rigs were moving out of Saskatchewan, out of Canada, into United States, into the

Williston basin areas.

The Americans had the foresight to pick up on the downturn and to bring themselves to an energy program and to put many of our people to work. This made it very inconvenient for a lot of families, having to all of a sudden just pick up and leave their home, their province, and their country.

Well, like I said, in the summer of '82, we introduced a new royalty tax structure known as the oil industrial recovery program. The royalty incentives seem to fly in the face of all the gloom and doom scenarios of a national recession. But there is little question of their overwhelming success. So far, in 1984, we have seen more than 2,500 wells drilled in the province of Saskatchewan — easily surpassing the total numbers for last year, and which also set a new mark.

(1615)

Our production levels are setting records. Land sales, as we had heard today, set another, and they are returning millions of dollars to the province. And above all, they are creating thousands of jobs. In short, our province is in the midst of what I call an oil boom, I guess, in some aspects, but I hate the word boom. I would suggest that probably stability would be a much better word.

But in response to the positive climate, the new companies are beginning to establish. The spin-off aspect of this oil has just been devastating in my particular area. Because of these new companies many, many people going to work — truckers, mechanics — which brings me to a point of the member from Pelly, the other day, when he said he had a letter from an individual that would do virtually anything anywhere. I would challenge the member from Pelly today to table or to send me that letter, and I will guarantee, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I could have that individual a job tomorrow. My particular area are looking for people to go to work.

That brings another problem that we do face in this province, is that I think some people have to take a look at the provincial scene, and sometimes there isn't all that many jobs available immediately in the cities that they live in, or in the particular areas that they live in. But I'm sure, if they would give me a call or give my particular constituency — companies in my particular constituency — a call, I'm sure we could accommodate many people for jobs. But I do challenge the member from Pelly to table that letter.

The NDP has termed our positive approach to development a give-away. Well, if I can give away a job, I will accept that. If I can give away a job and make a person feel good about working, I will accept that. Because, Mr. Speaker, I feel that giving a person a job, making a job available by throwing incentives out to companies to come into our province and develop, it seems to me a lot more nicer to have that kind of a pay cheque than a pay cheque coming in from an unemployment situation or possibly a welfare roll. It was indicated that these people could maintain their dignity that way, and I do totally agree with that.

A typical illustration of the overwhelming confidence in Saskatchewan oil industry was witnessed by the recent issue of Saskoil participation bonds in the province. The entire \$15 million issue was purchased by Saskatchewan investors in less than 36 hours.

And certainly natural gas is another sector where new ideas have been stimulated, and which the minister had talked on. And, Mr. Speaker, I would indicate that in the hon. member from Meadow Lake's particular riding, natural gas is under exploration and is being developed and set into the SPC line for distribution to particular communities in that area.

But these royalty tax structures, Mr. Speaker, have brought about an overwhelming confidence to the province, an overwhelming confidence which, one, is leading us into self-sufficiency. And I do believe that's all important.

Also with the tax royalties, and allowing this investment to take place, we've established the announcement of two upgraders. One in particular is the Husky Oil upgrader for my constituency in Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that this particular upgrader is going to have another exciting role to play in the province's commitment towards the employment situation in the province. Again, thousands of people are going to be employed.

I've had . . . I've been in several seminars where some people have stood up to speak in various areas where industries such as this magnitude has taken place; and where Lloydminster, the city of Lloydminster — there's now a population of 16,000 — they feel that in all probability, in about 10 years time we could be looking at anywhere from 20, 25 to 30,000 people. That's Lloydminster, but that doesn't take into consideration the other smaller communities around that particular area.

The investment is a \$3.4 billion investment for just one project. Look at the investment, the spin-off investment from all the other smaller businesses that will come to follow — many years, many years of ongoing investment in job creation.

I'd like to pass on some remarks in regards to our health programs. I suggest that we have been unfairly criticized by the members of the opposition by suggesting that our health system has been deteriorating in the province of Saskatchewan. I would like to remind the members opposite that I cannot see how they can justify such an attitude in being able to speak without a red face, or anything, by suggesting such a scenario. It's never been in the province's history where \$1,000 or better has been paid per year for every man, women, and child in the province of Saskatchewan.

I think the ongoing fact that we have taken away the moratorium on our nursing home, and are building nursing homes in rural Saskatchewan once again, and we are committed to building more in rural Saskatchewan again, taking the moratoriums off — in what I call a moratorium is because of the replacements of many, or the construction of many rural hospitals in this province. I call it a moratorium they had on it because they apparently haven't been doing it. We, as a government, are doing this.

And I want to relate into my constituency, especially, for 12 years under the administration of the NDP, they were promised a hospital around election times in Lloydminster. And it was always an election issue throwing false hopes into the people out there that they were going to get a new hospital.

Maidstone, Saskatchewan was another particular area where they threw out the idea and the intent that they were going to get a new hospital in Maidstone, Saskatchewan around election time. Cut Knife, Saskatchewan — the intent to build a hospital there around election time.

I want to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that we've eliminated that problem, and it's not around election time. We told the people in this province we were going to meet those commitments. And I was just speaking to the Leader of the Opposition here the other day in Crown corp and he says, "Where are these hospitals in Lloydminster and Maidstone?" He neglected to go on to say Cut Knife. He says, "There isn't a brick, there isn't a brick laid yet."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I was cut off because the meeting came to order again, but I would like to indicate that planning does take time, and some of the buildings and the hospitals that I've seen built under their administration should not have been built, and I do say that's from a lack of planning. We're planning and we're building good hospitals. We've got the planning structures under control, and I want to just put out a message to the Leader of the Opposition that possibly next spring you'll see a brick or two.

I want to say, too, with this in mind, with our nursing homes and our hospitals in mind, I want to also add that the NDP have been saying, during their particular debates, that we've done nothing for the senior citizen. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that hospitals and nursing homes are part of that, as well as part for all of us.

And I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, also that the senior citizens in this province of Saskatchewan aren't selfish. They have as much input into this province, into this government, as do all of us that are not senior citizens, and these individuals aren't selfish. They are contributing to our society today. They are useful people. They are not suggesting that, oh, government should just look after the senior citizen. They're suggesting we'll look after everybody and through this we are adopting their programs, their sincere programs, and their suggestions of where nursing homes and where hospitals should be built, updated, or expanded on. Also with the senior citizen program, the home improvement program, \$1,000 for any senior citizen that makes under, I believe it is a \$16,000 income per year, I have not had one complaint from any one of my senior citizens out of my particular riding about that program not being accepted. You know, the seniors that are making more than that 16,000 annually agreed they don't need that \$1,000. They spend their 1,000 on upgrading their homes. It's good for the economy. It takes a little bit of theirs out of savings. But the ones that hadn't had that favourable opportunity of having those kinds of savings to generate that kind of income have gotten a generous amount of commitment from this government.

I hear deterioration of highway system. I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I defeated the last minister of highways.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HOPFNER: — And I want to tell you that I've never met an individual that could be more hypocritical than himself by the way he used to run around this province promising miles and miles and miles of highway, miles, literally miles of highway that this province would have been paying for. We would have had to put that kind of a budget over a 25-30 year into one year. It's just unreal, unrealistic. And he's still doing the same thing. He's going out there. He's running around the country — we're going to do this, we're going to do that.

(1630)

My Minister of Highways has been announcing, has been announcing highway projects right across this province, right across this province, and they've been built. Not announcing them around elections, but announcing them when he's got the moneys to build those highways.

And I want to bring to mind the Borden Bridge again. We came into office and we said we were going to build that bridge, and we built it. It wasn't an election promise for years and years and years. We said we were going to build the Meridian Bridge. I'm just speaking of my particular area. We built the Meridian Bridge. It's been constructed. Go out there and look. We finished the Yellowhead shoulder widening in record time, in less time than the previous administration did. I can remember the previous administration had spent about five or six years between The Battlefords and Lloydminster and they were about half finished. We spend what? I believe it was about a year and a half on it, and complete it. Dollars saved, bucks saved, to go into new projects.

I want to say that when these people get up to criticize they should go back into their campaign offices and instead of ridiculing us for making promises and bringing back into this floor what happened about the E&H tax and all this other stuff . . . I want to tell you something. Before I leave I'm going to work diligently — diligently — to get rid of that tax.

But the people in Saskatchewan out there understand that, and the economics that we're in today with the farm situation, that we can't do those kind of things. They understand those

things. They understand that the governments have to have money coming in from somewhere to offset other burdens. But we're going to work at it. It's still our platform and it's still our commitment.

I want to go into a little bit of the social services, social reform that has taken place across the province here. I would think, Mr. Speaker, that dignity is finally being brought back to the individual. We are trying to set out some incentives for people to upgrade themselves so that they can leave their welfare rolls and go out and feel good and be able to support themselves, instead of rely on government. And I don't really believe that there is enough money that you can give an individual when he's not working. There's just too much time on their hands, and the more time an individual has, the more free time an individual has, as you know and I know, the more money we all spend. So it always wraps you up into the fact that welfare is not the answer. So this social reform has got to be one of the best things this province has ever been able to institute.

I want to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we are, as anyone else, trying harder than ever to bring the province about to a stability, but when we hear from the members of the opposition stating about the employment factors that we face in the province, the devastating unemployment, brings to mind the fact of the jobs that they want to do away with up in the northern part of the province. They adopted a policy some years ago in uranium, the development of uranium. They stuck \$600 million of good cold cash, of taxpayers' money, into that mine up in northern Saskatchewan. Six hundred million of the taxpayers' dollars are now under their types of policies, wanting to just throw it out the door, just throw it away. They've adopted a policy that says, well, maybe we shouldn't be in uranium mining any more. Maybe we ought to do away with the uranium mines. Well, that's fine. We're \$600 million short, plus interest. I'm sure they went out to borrow the money. They didn't have it in their coffers.

Plus the fact is that there's 10,000 more people now unemployed. On one side of the mouth they're talking about we've got a devastating unemployment rate in this province, and on the other side they're saying that they want to lay off another 10,000 people. Well, that's like this man that I have kind of a little running joke of around the area, where he gets up in the morning and he walks out on the street and he puts a glove on, one glove on his left hand. His friend sees him walking down the street, and he says to him, "How come you have one glove on?" "Why," he says, "I was listening to the weatherman. He says on one hand it might be hot, and on the other hand it might be cold."

Well, that's just about the way they talk. That's just about the way they talk, Mr. Speaker. And I want to suggest to you that with the way they flip-flop around in the legislature, I want to just say that I would tend to challenge them, instead of coming in here with all these negatives, to come in and produce sound ideas so that we can carry on as a responsible group of people, responsible to the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

With this, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to take up too much more time. I'd just like to say and suggest to you that I do support the Speech from the Throne. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MYERS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to participate in the debate from the throne speech, and I'd like to take this time to congratulate yourself for being elected president of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in their annual conference in the Isle of Man this year. And I know you will fulfil that responsibility with great commitment, and will make a great, and do make a great, ambassador throughout the world in your travels in that position.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MYERS: — I'd also like to take this time to congratulate my former desk mate, and the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, on her third win in that constituency, and also on moving the Speech from the Throne. I'd also like to congratulate the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood for seconding that speech.

But really we have to remind the opposition that is what they are. They oppose everything, everything. And the member from Quill Lakes says, everything bad. Well, I'd like to remind him that from 1971 to 1982 it was commonly referred to as the medieval days of socialism in Saskatchewan, the days of serfs and kingdoms, the people being the serfs and those members being the kings. But I'd really like to remind them of the record, of this government's record in the last two years. Last year in housing, last year in housing, 101 per cent up over 1982's record, 101 per cent. They never had a record like that.

Building permits go up 42.5 per cent in 1983 over 1982 — one year, a very good record. But I guess the biggest record of all, and the most significant improvement in this province's economy, was the oil and gas record. As a result of the oil industry's recovery program in 1983, there were 1,843 wells drilled, up 128 per cent over 1982. And this year, this year we've already broken that record and we're over 2,500 wells drilled and we're not even at the end of the year — far superior to any record they had and that goes back to the heydays of revenue. And you know this is a significant factor because there's over 1,000 new jobs in this province as a result of that program, 1,000. And they ask where the jobs are. And I'll be touching upon that later.

That program also produced 61.1 million barrels of oil, up 17 per cent from 1982. That's recovery. They say Tory times are tough times. Well, we must be very tough because we're getting better production and, as the member from Weyburn says, "Tory people are tough people." Yes, I would have to agree with that. As a matter of fact, I have a news clipping here about Tory people, the newest Tory in Alberta. The headline says, "NDP member crosses lines."

Edmonton: Bonnie van Voorst, a Fairview, Alberta business woman and card-carrying member of the New Democratic Party, said Wednesday she will seek the Conservative nomination for an expected by-election in Spirit River-Fairview riding. She says, "I'm a free enterpriser. I'm not a believer in government handouts." And she was NDP, used to be. Van Voorst said that she has cut her allegiance to the New Democratic Party. "I think it's time for people to elect someone who will work to get jobs, not someone intent on putting people on welfare."

And this is said by one of their former card-carrying members in Alberta. They talk about the times in Alberta. Well, the people are seeing it, not only in Saskatchewan, they're seeing it in Alberta. And I know they'll see it in Manitoba at the next provincial election.

Talk about tough times, talk about deficits. Their colleagues in Manitoba have the highest deficit on record, one of the highest deficits among any provincial government, and it grows by leaps and bounds, \$700 million — one-year deficit . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg says thanks to Sterling Lyon. Well, Sterling Lyon had a balanced budget at the end of his term.

But I'll move on. In this province we're up over \$500 million in investment — \$500 million in 1983 over 1982. Not a bad record. And here's another one the member from Shaunavon should know. Oil reserves increased for the first time in 15 years. And I guess part of that reserve came from the member from Shaunavon's own farm land who this last year sank an oil well.

Natural gas . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, he motions he sank two oil wells . . . Three, now. Well, it's pretty hard to believe how a member who participates in the oil business, rents his oil rig out of Edmonton and employs Alberta people, can stand in this House and criticize this government.

Natural gas activity up — 1982, nine gas wells — nine. That is up, way up as the member from Saskatoon Sutherland has previously said. Another high point. The population for the first time, for the first time in this province's history, we're up over one million people. Now you wonder why that's significant. Well let's go back to 1935 before they were government. We had 950,000 people in 1935. Forty years of socialism, well almost 40 years of socialism, we didn't grow much. Now we're growing, now we're growing.

(1645)

Saskatchewan's labour force in 1983 was the only labour force in this country to increase, and they're talking about jobs. We must be providing jobs if it's increased. Other provinces declined. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And that, Mr. Member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, reflects a strong, growing economy. And the member just cannot perceive why, under their administration, they were never, or never had the lowest rate of unemployment in this country. Well, under this administration we do.

Job creation — 10,000 new jobs in 1983, regardless of what they say. That's what StatsCan say — 10,000 new jobs. Saskatchewan led the nation in labour force growth — led the nation. Saskatchewan was the only province in 1983 whose average employment levels were above 1981. That represents it right there. Those are the figures.

Potash sales — potash sales up 36 per cent over 1982, and we know what happened in the potash market — up 36 per cent and growing this year . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg says we're not making any money, and yet the quarterly report shows profits every quarter. I don't know how he anticipates not making money with quarterly profits.

Nursing home construction — now this is a good one. In seven years of NDP government, the last seven years preceding 1982, they spent \$3.5 million on nursing homes, 3.5 million. In the first two years of this government, we spent \$11 million — \$11 million.

And the members across might remember why we have a record of \$11 million; because we care, and they are needed. But I have a memo here — it's from Walter Smishek, chairman of treasury board, to the member who used to represent my riding, Herman Rolfes, and the memo's dated January 4, 1976, and it says:

On December 1, 1975, the treasury board renewed the Department of Social Services 1976-1977 budgetary request for construction grants to special care homes, nursing homes. The treasury board is seriously concerned about the level of construction occurring in special home-care sector.

They're concerned about it. I don't know why. It was required.

The level of activity proposed in 1976-1977 budgetary request would result in a surplus of beds without considering the impact of a home-care program.

A surplus. That is why today we have long waiting lists. That's why in 1982 we had long waiting lists. There was never a surplus. They just didn't want to put the money into it.

It's further substantiated by a letter from the Department of Social Services, dated 1978, to a municipality, small town, and in the letter this is the reason they gave for not continuing to build nursing homes.

Your request and similar requests from other communities have been held in abeyance pending a carrying out of a number of studies both within and outside of the department to determine need for additional level I, II, and III special care homes

throughout the province, and valid alternatives to institutional care.

It goes on further.

The preference of the elderly to remain in their own homes plus the fact that we have . . .

I'm sorry, this is a copy of a memorandum they supposedly destroyed.

. . . plus the fact that we have some 7,800 special care beds currently in operation throughout the province.

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The former minister of social services says this is a hate sheet. I'm referring to one of their letters . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Funny, looks like a letter to me. Looks like a letter to me.

It goes on:

There has been a moratorium in place on a development of any additional special care beds.

And that's reflected by the \$3.5 million spent in seven years, the policies of the NDP. They didn't care about the people. That was the same time they were buying potash mines, the same time. And during that time, during the time they were purchasing potash mines, they laid off or cut back on 400 nursing positions in this province — 400, to buy potash mines. They like buying things.

They spent \$600 million on uranium development, SMDC, \$270 million of which came out of the taxpayers' hip pocket — \$270 million. And the rest of that \$330 million came from the money markets of New York — socialists, socialists. They didn't care about the elderly. No way. Moratorium on nursing beds.

I'd like to move on. They talk about gasoline prices, and that was one of our major commitments in our election plank. One of the lowest gasoline prices in Canada. The lowest gasoline prices in Canada. And what would it be under the NDP? What would it be? Would it be what we have today? It would be 53 cents a litre. A difference of 9 cents from the present rate — 53 cents. And they want to put it back on, or they wanted to put it back on. They know they can't win an election by putting on taxes. They have to put the taxes on after they win the election, so people, beware. Did they tell you in 1975 they were going to buy potash mines? No. They did that after the election — after. Can you believe, or can you trust the NDP today? You really can't.

Another one of our programs, and we have to remind them of it. When interest rates were 19 per cent for homes, did they help out? Did they help out? Not one cent. Not one cent.

We promised a 13.25 per cent fixed top rate for mortgages in this province, and we delivered. Up to the end of June of this year, we have spent \$45 million on that commitment alone, and we intend on extending that commitment — and we have — to the year 1988. So people who are buying houses in a fluctuating interest rate market can count on this program, a stable program that they know they will never pay more than 13.25 per cent.

And at the same time we did that, Saskatchewan was the only province in Canada whose credit rating went up in 1983. The only province. And we went up from their government. Now that's showing confidence of the Canadian people in the province of Saskatchewan.

In the same year, in the same time our credit rating went up last year, Manitoba's credit rating went down. They went down. Not only that, not only did we promise the people a reduction in

their mortgages, but we also promised to lower utility rates, and we did. We froze the rates. In electricity we froze the rates for 22 months. In gas we froze it for 17 months. Froze them.

No increases for basic telephone services in 1984, keeping the rates down. No increases for natural gas, and no increases for a year in SGI. No increases for a year in SGI, and probably not for the distant future either.

In this province we have the lowest average taxes for any family that is earning less than \$25,000 a year — the lowest taxes. Not in Manitoba, but here. Here. Not in NDP Manitoba. Here. The lowest. And for the families earning \$35,000 and less, we have the second lowest taxes in Canada.

And another one. This is one they're not going to like. I can remember in 1981, I think their health budget was something like \$837 million. And this year, this last year, over \$1 billion — more than ever spent on health, and building hospitals, and replacing hospitals that were long overdue; building nursing homes that they didn't build. And if you'd been in power today, you still wouldn't have built them or replaced the needed hospitals. That works out to over \$1,000 for every man, woman, and child in this province.

But the biggest thing is the hypocritical statements they make in this motion that was moved by the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and seconded by the member from Cumberland. They have a point here. They say:

This throne speech fails to recognize the important opportunities for economic growth such as a properly financed education system, and an improved transportation network, and a renewed dedication to the protection of our environment.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Tell us about university funding.

MR. MYERS: — Well, I will. I will. The record . . . It being near 5 o'clock, I will make a few brief statements.

The record in educational funding . . . They've been harping on the funds allocated to Saskatchewan universities. Well, when we came to power, Mr. Speaker, in 1982, the funds allocated to Saskatchewan universities from this government were 100.8 million — \$100 million, approximately. Three years later, approximately three years later, they are \$132.8 million, approximately 11 per cent per year . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Increase.

MR. MYERS: — . . . spent on Saskatchewan universities — increase.

And not only have we spent money on universities, we have also put in more than \$8 million into student loans and bursary programs. Last year, 1983, we put in \$17 million into student loans and bursaries, and this year we're putting in \$25 million to send our youth to university. That's a 42 per cent increase — a 42 per cent increase.

And on top of that, we've put in \$8.5 million into a geological engineering building, a building which they wouldn't build.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.