

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

April 15, 1985

EVENING SITTING

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Andrew that the Assembly resolve itself into the committee of finance.

MR. GLAUSER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the House adjourned at 5 p.m., I was discussing the lack of planning that was going on under the previous administration, and how the short-term planning practice really led to no planning, particularly in election years, when the NDP would make capital expenditure announcements — of significant magnitude, I might add; for example, the nursing home in Saskatoon, and with no funding in place. No funding in place. And avoiding increases in the public utilities. The public utilities, you can take a look at the chart, and you can pick out the election years by the looks of those charts: 1978, 1975, no increases.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Planning.

MR. GLAUSER: — Planning. Planning for an election. Planning for an election. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this is opportunism of the worst degree.

The five-year, 1.5 billion program, as it relates to capital projects and announced by the Minister of Finance, will have a stabilizing effect on the construction industry, and recipients of third-party funding will have less difficulty with their decision-making process.

I want to turn now to a headline in the Star-Phoenix, and I quote: “A tax grab, Blakeney says of the budget.” Let us not look at the source of these funds, but rather the utilization of them, and compare that to the NDP management, or mismanagement as it was, of taxpayers’ funds. The \$350 million this taxation will generate over the next five years is a case of asking those with full employment to assist the financing of the creation of jobs.

Now, what would the NDP do? Well, Mr. Speaker, they would do the same as they’ve done in the past over and over again when they were building their empire, a family of Crown corporations. And how were they doing it? They were doing it, Mr. Speaker, with interest-free loans. And what were those interest-free loans? SGI, 72 million; Sedco, 33 million; Sask Mining, 110; Saskoil, 54; Sask Power, 49 — all millions; SaskTel 41; potash corporation, 418; Saskatchewan development fund, 2 million. That is all taxpayers’ money, Mr. Speaker.

The millions I have referred to do not take into consideration the 600 million the NDP spent on uranium development. And now you want to destroy the uranium program in the province and put 10,000 people out of employment, eh? Shut it all down before the taxpayers of this province have even had a return on their funds.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the NDP would show no compassion for the thousands of people that they would put out of employment, not just the 10,000 I have referred to but the offshoot of that kind of employment. No compassion, Mr. Speaker, except to let them sit and draw social welfare, to be dependent upon the state — a prime objective of the NDP philosophy — to have everyone subservient to them.

The time is long since passed when the commercial Crowns can expect to see further injections of taxpayers’ money. Quite the reverse, Mr. Speaker. They are expected to provide \$200 million to the provincial treasury over the next five years. These earnings have also been targeted, Mr.

Speaker, earmarked as they are for the Agriculture Department fund. And what do the NDP say? It's not enough. Yet, as I have outlined earlier, when the NDP administrations were feeding their Crowns, they paid not the least bit of attention to the farmer, nor to the businessman that was caught in the squeeze of high interest rates.

The NDP had no reserve to allow farmers to get 8 per cent to buy farms, to guarantee loans of prime plus a half to operate their units, to provide funding for irrigation projects, to subsidize loan interest on livestock. During those years of high interest rates, did the NDP care if the farm failed?

No, Mr. Speaker, they did not. Farm failures were land bank opportunities. It was just one more method of nationalizing, in perhaps a devious and subtle way, to take the entire land holdings for their own purpose in this province.

Another pillar of the Minister of Finance's budget is health. This will be dealt with by the Minister of Health. However, I do feel there are certain aspects as they relate to Saskatoon that are worthy of repetition.

Everyone is well aware of the waiting list problems in Saskatoon, and I'll let anyone know that the situation did not spring up overnight, but was caused by the NDP's administration and its obsession with the family of Crowns rather than paying attention to the changing needs of the real families of this province.

They ignored the ever increasing percentage of our population over 65 years of age that were requiring medical attention, or long-term care. The member from Pelly this afternoon was talking about compassion; I wonder if he knows what compassion is. And the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden mentioned this, this afternoon, but it also needs repeating.

The moratorium they placed on nursing homes, the 400 nursing positions they eliminated, that led to a drastic increase in long-term care patients in our hospitals in Saskatoon, taking beds out of the natural flow of short-term medical procedures. And that's compassion? Just shut these seniors up in hospitals for the rest of their life.

Obsolescence in plant and equipment were ignored at the same time. All of this took place during a period of years when revenues were high, and everyone knows where the money went, and we cannot repeat it too often, to the family of Crown corporations.

So what is happening now, and particularly in Saskatoon? The Minister of Health today has announced the addition of two floors to the new section of the University Hospital, a cost of which is \$23 million; major expansion at St. Paul's Hospital, \$50 million; commencement of construction of the new and enlarged City Hospital, \$100 million. This is real money. This isn't going into the family of Crown corporation; this is for real families in the province of Saskatchewan.

In addition, the new cancer facility in Saskatoon will be completed to provide a state of the art cancer treatment program in Saskatoon.

All of the aforesaid hospitals did not, all of a sudden, require regeneration since we came to office. But what did the Leader of the Opposition say in his budget address? He said New Democrats believe the regeneration of Saskatoon hospitals must go forward. All of a sudden in 1985, the Leader of the Opposition says that those renovations and expansions should go forward. They had plenty of opportunity; they did nothing. It is now being done.

Just one more second, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please.

MR. GLAUSER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was getting a little deafening in here. There's one more item I would like to touch, and that is small business.

As you heard the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden this afternoon talking about the government creates jobs for government growth. And that is exactly what the NDP did, and they would do it again, if they every got the chance. Build big government.

This government's philosophy is that business growth, particularly small business growth, is the most appropriate engine of real economic growth, and more importantly, lasting employment growth.

The government acted to improve business climate, cut red tape. Imagine that we have in the last three years cut in excess of 1,000 regulations from the books — this is a step toward making business able to function in their own yard and not be controlled by government — and introduced improved government organizations to encourage investment in the province. Major programs include the Mortgage Interest Reduction plan, the oil industry incentive program, and the Build-A-Home program.

The industrial incentive program will be extend for an additional year, '85-86.

Investment of job creation benefits are estimated to be similar to '84-85.

Cost to government for these projects, at \$7.3 million, is no small sum towards helping private enterprise create that employment that we so direly need.

And I would like to say one thing about the construction industry. As I said earlier, these grants, on a five-year basis, will have significant impact on the manner in which construction companies can plan their work. The construction industry and related business will benefit from a capital construction program of approximately \$1.3 billion, to be undertaken this year by the government and Crown corporations. These expenditures are exclusive of the \$108 million in capital expenditures voted through four special funds, and will create over 9,000 jobs.

And I want to just go back and touch a bit on the constituency of Mayfair who, by all guesses at this moment, the arena will be located in that constituency, and I can tell you that this is a boost to the city of Saskatoon, not only for the construction, but also on a continuing basis for the amount of employment that it will create.

Also in this constituency over the three years, there have been three new schools, and expansion to another. There have been three new churches, and I want to just mention the latest in worship places, and that is the Hindu Temple. This is the first of its kind in western Canada that . . . It is built to all the specifications of what you would normally see in India, and certainly is an asset to the community. And why shouldn't we all be positive about the direction that this government is taking, the direction that this budget is pointing us? And I certainly will be supporting it. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm certainly pleased tonight, Mr. Speaker, to take part, in terms on the debate, on the Devine government's fourth deficit budget. It's a deficit that many, many people in Saskatchewan aren't proud of, a \$1.2 billion deficit.

(1915)

Mr. Speaker, it's mismanagement at its utmost. Like the previous budgets, Mr. Speaker, this budget has been, and always will be, a major disappointment to northern people. More than

that, Mr. Speaker, it's an insult to people living in northern Saskatchewan, people in the North. It's neglect, it's an abandonment to people living in the northern administration district. It's a big tax increase for all people living in Saskatchewan — the largest in Saskatchewan history, Mr. Speaker — and a tax increase only for ordinary families, the ordinary citizen of Saskatchewan. Not for the rich and not either, Mr. Speaker, for the big resource corporations, and not for the big oil companies, but a large tax increase on Saskatchewan families and ordinary citizens of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — And I ask, Mr. Speaker, what does this budget say about the North? About Northerners, about northern people and northern issues? Nothing, Mr. Speaker, nothing. No mention, not one word. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it has more tax breaks for oil companies, but not one word about Northerners and their plight. Not a mention about the 95 per cent unemployment rate, the high reliance on welfare that we have in northern Saskatchewan; not a mention about the grievances, the unemployment that we have in the North.

We were supposed to be a part of the mainstream of society, the mainstream of Saskatchewan. When this government came into power they cut off the northern administration district line and we were supposed to be a part of Saskatchewan. Equal partnership, like my colleague from Athabasca just mentioned. We were supposed to be a part of the mainstream of Saskatchewan. Are we a part of the mainstream of Saskatchewan today? Are we? I ask that, Mr. Speaker,. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this budget is an insult to people living in the northern administration district. It is an insult to people living in the northern administration district. It's neglect and it's abandonment of the people's issues and grievances; the people living in the top half of this province and it's a crying shame to this administration, to this government.

When we look, Mr. Speaker, when we look through the Estimates, however, we find that the budget does indeed have some impact, some impact on the North. And you know, Mr. Speaker, it's a bad and negative impact. There's no mention of the new hospital. There's no mention of the new hospital promised for La Ronge, no mention of northern health care, no mention of nursing care homes that the people in that part of the province have been continuously striving for, continuously meeting about, continuously bringing to the attention of this administration. There's no mention of the health care needs of La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Cumberland House, Pinehouse, Southend, and the communities surrounding that area.

Another Devine promise has been broken, Mr. Speaker. There is no mention of northern education. Grants for the northern economic development branch have been frozen. On July 16, 1982, the former minister of northern Saskatchewan, the hon. member from Meadow Lake, talked about a self-economics development plan, a self sufficient economic strategy. Where is that strategy, Mr. Speaker? No mention in this budget at all. While we have people living in the north with 95 per cent unemployment, there is no mention. There is no mention for employment strategies.

Grants for northern revenue sharing programs cut, frozen, frozen. There's no help, Mr. Speaker, for northern communities, no help for northern families, and no help for northern Saskatchewan — no help for northern families and the high unemployment that we have in northern Saskatchewan, nothing at all.

Let me take just a moment, Mr. Speaker, and try to put this budget into some perspective. Let's ask ourselves what the Devine government has done for the North; or rather, what the Devine government has done to the North.

First, there's their open for big business policy, and it has failed, Mr. Speaker, it has failed not only in northern Saskatchewan, it has failed in southern Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — The Premier prefers to go to places like New York, London, to talk with foreign bankers and does not dare to come to Cumberland House, Montreal lake, Weyakwin, and communities in northern Saskatchewan, and to talk about the real problems that confront us. Nor, Mr. Speaker, did this government and this premier decide that the big bankers, the bond dealers, in the East could solve our problems. We're at the whim of big business. We're at the whim of the bankers, the bond dealers, and this government. This government hasn't got the guts and the courage to put into policy what we really need in northern Saskatchewan.

Second, Mr. Speaker, this Devine government has pushed up the unemployment rolls and the welfare reliance in northern Saskatchewan. Unemployment now — and I state to the members in this House that we have unemployment as high up as 95 per cent. Working men and women, young people now on social assistance, people who do not need welfare, who do not want welfare, have no incentive, no options, no hope from this administration, from this government, Mr. Speaker. People who want jobs cannot rely on this administration. For northern people, Mr. Speaker, the Devine government has meant more unemployment and more welfare.

Third, Mr. Speaker, what has the Devine government done for northern families? It has taken away the northern food transportation program, a \$255,000 program that has assisted northern families in places like Wollaston Lake, Kinoosao, Stony Rapids, Black Lake. That was there to assist, to alleviate some of the high cost of living. These people took that program away and gave it to their big corporate friends.

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh yes, definitely you have, Mr. Deputy Premier, you have. That's right, Mr. Speaker. They have taken away a small program to provide fresh food, fresh milk, to northern families and northern children. They have taken food away from the families and given it to their big corporate friends.

Mr. Speaker, this government has failed to provide basic needs for the people living in the northern administration district. It has failed to provide housing for northern families — no housing for senior citizens, no housing for our young families with their children. Oh, but now it has done something for families. It has increased their taxes, and it has taken away their property tax rebates. Mr. Speaker, it's a bad budget — it's a bad news budget, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me turn for just a moment to this government's performance on jobs. They talk about jobs in their budget, of course, but then they always talk about jobs. And that's all it is, Mr. Speaker, is just talk. In 1982 they promised jobs and that year they delivered 33,000 unemployed — a record number of unemployed. Then in 1983 they once again promised to create jobs and reduce unemployment, and that year they delivered 36,000 unemployed — another record performance for the Devine government. Then in 1984 they once again promised jobs, and they promised to reduce unemployment for Saskatchewan people. And there, Mr. Speaker, they created 38,000 people unemployed. Another record, Mr. Speaker,. Another Devine government promise broken.

And today their policies have failed, and we have 46,000 people unemployed in Saskatchewan. Forty-six thousand people unemployed, Mr. Speaker, according to the official Statistics Canada, but does the budget speech of the Minister recognize that? No, it just promises more, it just talks about more jobs.

But my constituents in Cumberland, Mr. Speaker, they are tired of this empty talk, tired of the broken promises. And they ask, how can we believe what the Devine government says when we see what is being done? And that is why, Mr. Speaker, I would invite the Premier to come to my constituency.

I would wholeheartedly invite the Premier and several cabinet ministers to come into the

Cumberland constituency and try to talk person to person on a personal basis, what the grievances are in northern Saskatchewan. Come up and visit with Northerners, with northern people who don't have jobs today; people who have no hope; people who can't find work. Listen to the frustration and despair of a young man who has not been able to find steady work for the last three years. Listen to the heartbroken parents of many other young people who have committed suicide in the course of the last couple of years because they couldn't find work, because they couldn't find dignity in their own community. Perhaps the Premier of this province would like to explain to them that, in his view, the open for big business policy has not worked.

But I guess, Mr. Speaker, the biggest broken promise of all, Mr. Speaker, is this: the Devine government's PC party promise to northern people is nothing but a vision, a vision that has turned into a nightmare. That's what it is, Mr. Speaker, a Devine nightmare for northern Saskatchewan residents, which insults their dignity, undermines their strength, and creates anger and frustration and despair.

A Devine nightmare for the children of the North who this government is condemning, condemning to a lifetime of lost opportunity. Opportunities that should begin with jobs, Mr. Speaker, jobs that were promised them. And that promise has been broken.

(1930)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few brief comments regarding a tradition of industries that so many of my constituents rely upon, traditional industries that are a part of their lives, a way of living in harmony with the natural environment.

Where in this budget speech, Mr. Speaker, is there any recognition of the importance of their traditional way of life? To be sure, the budget mentions banks. And it mentions the big oil companies. But what about trapping, Mr. Speaker? What about trapping? What about the traditional industry for trapping, for commercial fishing, for hunting, which is so important to many northern people?

What about the fishermen, Mr. Speaker? There's no mention in this budget about the commercial fishermen. There's no mention, Mr. Speaker, no mention of how this government is now making it more difficult for northern fishermen, more difficult for northern families to even feed themselves from this renewable and traditional natural resource.

I was at a meeting, Mr. Speaker, just as recently as last month, where we were supposed to have five cabinet ministers attending a meeting of northern issues. And I was at this particular meeting where they were supposed to answer some basic questions regarding bread and butter issues regarding northern people.

The minister that instigated that meeting never showed up for this particular meeting.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Which one?

MR. YEWS: — The member for P.A.-Duck Lake. My colleague asked me where this member was. He took off. He ducked out of this meeting. He ducked out of this particular meeting . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Oh, no. He wasn't in Ottawa, Mr. Deputy Premier. He was not in Ottawa. He ducked out at the last minute. Apparently, he must have heard that there was going to be tremendous pressure and tremendous organization working at that particular meeting. So he ducked out.

I attended this meeting with a good, diverse number of people — trappers, fishermen, people, residents in the northern administration district. And they talked about, with the remainder of that delegation . . . They had two, I believe, two ministers that showed up at 2:30. We were

supposed to meet at 2 o'clock, but they didn't show up until about 4:30, this administration. They showed up finally, but we had two ministers anyway, out of five.

And we talked to them about domestic fishing permits; we talked to them about hunting and trapping and tourism issues. But do you think they could understand, Mr. Speaker, what the issues were? They kind of shook their heads, puzzled, with puzzled expressions.

They didn't understand what it means to a person, what it means to a family, to try to get a domestic fishing permit — what a domestic fishing permit is. They should try to get a permit from the conservation office, put out a net, and provide food for your family. That's what it means. But do you think those ministers that were in attendance understand what that meant? No, they didn't have an idea as to what it meant.

People are continuously frustrated with this administration, Mr. Speaker. You think a person can cut down logs in northern Saskatchewan for wood, for firewood for their cabins? Under this administration you can't, Mr. Speaker. You think a person can cut down logs to build his or her own cabin with this administration? They can't, Mr. Speaker.

And all of a sudden, May 26, 1982, when this administration came into power, there's nothing but game preserve signs all over the North. All over the northern administration district, you go from one point to another, there's nothing but game preserve signs, and that member for Shellbrook will probably know what I am talking about. Just north of P.A. north of Meadow Lake, north of Nipawin, there's nothing but game preserve signs.

And we can't even go out there to hunt for food, our basic needs, under your administration. We can't. Because your administration, your government, has put up these notices and regulations that prohibit us from hunting, from trapping, from commercial fishing. The tolerances are so high nowadays that commercial fishermen can't make a living for themselves.

That's your administration. That's the Devine government's administration. That's your policies — bureaucratic nightmares.

I have a lot to say about this administration, Mr. Speaker.

Why is the Devine government making it more difficult for northern families to use the natural forests, Mr. Speaker, for their own domestic family purposes? This government is making it more difficult to use the forests for domestic firewood. It's making it more difficult to use the forest resources for logs to build traditional northern homes. And it's making it more difficult, Mr. Speaker, continuously, and it even restricts Northerners, northern people's ability to hunt for their own food. That's this administration. And what about wildlife, Mr. Speaker? Once again there's been no mention about that new industry. No mention in this budget.

Quite simply, Mr. Speaker, this Devine government's — the Progressive Conservative government of today — has not any understanding of northern people, no respect for northern traditions, no positive social and economic policies for the North. Its budget holds out no hope for the families and the communities of northern Saskatchewan, absolutely none.

But we're big business, Mr. Speaker. Well this was certainly a bad news budget for ordinary citizens, a pickpocket budget that did not even try to raise more government revenues from the big resource companies and the multinational corporations. And of course we all know why, for it is those big companies that bank-roll the PC party. It is those rich corporations which make big financial contributions to the Devine government, to the Devine Tories. And it is those same big corporations, Mr. Speaker, which have been the only winners for the Devine open for business policy. For the rest of Saskatchewan, open for big business has meant more unemployment, more welfare reliance, more bankruptcies, more family breakdowns, more stress on the ordinary families in ordinary communities.

The Devine government's economic development policy's all wrong, Mr. Speaker, for it seeks to rely only on big foreign investors: the ones in New York; Paris; bankers and bond dealers from the East. Their policies, their policy promises profits for the rich, but delivers nothing for the ordinary citizen of this province, the ordinary common citizen of Saskatchewan. Their policies have meant absolutely nothing for the ordinary common citizen.

Where, for example, is this Devine, is this development strategy for the North, and northern communities? Where is their social and economic development strategies? Where is their policy, Mr. Speaker? Where is their plan to help alleviate the high unemployment up North? Quite simply, Mr. Speaker, they have none. They have no vision, no strategy, no plan, no policy, no philosophy for the North. No strategy, no policy, no plan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — We have young people with no jobs, Mr. Speaker; seniors with poor health care and no housing; children whose education needs are being badly neglected by this government, by this administration, by Devine, and by the Conservatives; northern communities which need municipal services and community facilities — more needs, Mr. Speaker, which are being ignored and neglected by this government.

Why, Mr. Speaker? Simply because their only answer is to say, we'll let big business do it; we'll let big business look after the unemployment up North. Mr. Speaker, that is no answer. It's a sell-out. It's a sell-out by this government, by this administration, by the Devine government.

The open for big business policy has been tried. It's tried, and it's exhausted, and it has not accomplished nothing. They have tried it and it has failed. So now they just keep on with the same failed policy approach, but they don't even dare to talk about it in public any more. They don't talk about the open for big business policy anymore, do they?

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let us ask a couple of the basic questions about the Devine government's budget. The first question is a very fundamental one: is it fair? The answer, Mr. Speaker, is no. Like my colleague from Quill Lakes just mentioned, definitely it's not fair. It is not fair, Mr. Speaker. It raises taxes for the ordinary families and farmers and working people, but not for the oil companies. Not fair, Mr. Speaker, not fair at all.

The second question is: is this a sensible budget with sensible spending priorities? The answer definitely, Mr. Speaker, is no. grants for development and community services in the North have been frozen; highway construction budget allotment has been cut; hospital operating funding inadequate, Mr. Speaker.

We have been fighting for a hospital, for a nursing care home in the La Ronge area for La Ronge residents and area. The Minister of Health announced a number of major projects for the province, but there is not one mention for communities north of Meadow Lake, north of P.A., north of Nipawin, not one mention. And they tell us to be a part of Saskatchewan, they want the North . . . When they dismantled DNS they told us that we should become a part of the mainstream of this province. But when it comes to budget allotments, do they mention us? Not a word, Mr. Speaker. In terms of environmental protection, that budget's been cut.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, is this Devine government budget consistent with the fundamental principles which are so important to Saskatchewan people? Does it show compassion? No. Does it demonstrate sound economic and social policy? No. does it address the urgent, pressing pocket-book issues facing families today? No, it doesn't, Mr. Speaker. Does it provide real help for northern families and northern communities? No. Does it propose to deal wisely with our environment and our natural resources? No. does it have a sound vision for the future of our

province, and the future of our young people, and a future with bright opportunities? Sadly, Mr. Speaker, again the answer is no.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, more and more people are looking to the New Democratic alternatives. For Saskatchewan New Democrats do have those principles, Mr. Speaker, and we take great pride in the Saskatchewan way of working together, in co-operation with our communities and our fellow men.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, because this budget is an insult to Northerners, an insult to northern Saskatchewan, because it imposes the largest tax increases in Saskatchewan history on families and working people, because this pickpocket budget is unfair, and because this budget violates basic principles of fairness, justice and compassion, for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against the main motion. Thank you.

HON. MR. DUTCHAK: — Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy speaking after either of the northern members because, as the House is well aware, I do spend a great deal of my time in northern Saskatchewan, particularly having taken on the new responsibilities of being responsible for the Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation and northern affairs. In fact, some say that I'm seen in the North more often than the two northern members put together.

(1945)

So it leads me to ask why it is so, and it probably is explained by a little press statement I have here that I received a copy of, indicating that the member who just spoke apparently had some trouble in his nomination, and a young fellow named Keith Goulet appears to be running against him for the nomination.

And apparently the reasons why this gentleman is contesting the nomination was seen a few minutes ago when we heard the baseless rhetoric spewed forth by the member previous. Apparently the new individual's running because he believes that the member is not pursuing realistic goals for the North, and is really out of touch.

Needless to say that after the nomination convention is over, it's a little like Trivial Pursuit, I suppose, because the Northerners are saying that both northern seats will be going Conservative this time, and we're pleased to hear this, of course.

Mr. Speaker, I normally tend to be more positive than what I've just stated in my opening remarks. However, I think what we have is an opportunity for the public to see the difference, really, between the party opposite — the opposition — and the governing party, and what I intend to do in my constituency, for my constituents, is simply take copies of Hansard containing the remarks of the member from Cumberland, and then my remarks and the remarks of some of my associates, and simply allow the constituents to read the remarks to judge for themselves, because I think what we've heard today, including the member's comments, the member from Cumberland, is rhetoric, and Mr. Speaker, the public is tired of rhetoric.

Those days are over, and you can see it on the federal scene and you can see it on the provincial scene. Mr. Speaker, that's why I intend to support the budget. The budget indicates a five-year plan, which is novel. The members opposite had a difficult time understanding why a governing party would want to be honest enough to disclose a five-year plan to the public, because obviously that takes away from a governing party's ability to bring up the goody list, which the Leader of the Opposition tried in 1982. Obviously, it didn't work then and it really backs up what I'm saying, that the public is simply tired of that old form of politics.

I commend the finance minister for bringing in the new system of governments providing the people with a five-year plan, and in the next election it's going to be interesting, because the public will have to choose between a party that has proposed a five-year plan, has clearly spelled

out where this party wants to take the government of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan, as opposed to a party that won't say anything about their five-year plan, or any plan.

I think what the budget does do, Mr. Speaker, it highlights areas that traditionally are areas where governments should be involved in, such as education and health. The traditional role of government is back, the role of providing a good sound education base for its people, and we've slipped in the past 10 or 20 years. When our government took office, it's no secret that we were second from the bottom in terms of technical training spaces in the province of Saskatchewan. So we've had some catching up to do.

We've had a government previously that forgot about the traditional role of government and went beyond that, and basically neglected the role of governing in the health fields and education fields. And now we're back to taking care of business where we should be.

The construction of special care homes has started, and I was pleased to announce a special care home in Duck Lake the other day, in my constituency. And these are being announced across the province because we are catching up. There has been a lag. There was a moratorium placed on the construction of nursing home beds by the former government, by the NDP government, and they chose instead to invest money in uranium mines and potash mines and other investments that were a priority to them. And then, today, they are criticizing big business, and I can't think of any bigger business than uranium mines. But, Mr. Speaker, that's what happened. They forgot about their role as governments. They forgot about the people that built this province — the seniors — and we are remembering. We are remembering that these people worked hard and got by on far less than many people are fortunate to receive these days, and we are taking care of seniors and are proud of that, Mr. Speaker.

The future of our province, Mr. Speaker, is clearly based on our resources, which include people resources, natural resources, and also the future of the high-tech industries and the resources that still haven't been developed in this province. The moves we have made in developing resources, for example, in the oil field, Mr. Speaker, represent a clear intelligent direction, a direction that's now producing revenue far exceeding any revenue ever produced by the government before us, and last year we nearly reached \$700 million into our provincial revenues. Now this is clearly why we can afford to build more nursing homes, we can afford to spend money in education and health, because our resource policies are bringing revenue into government.

Contrast that, Mr. Speaker, to the former resource policy where the former government simply paid people to dig dry holes and scared all the oil companies out of the province, and nothing happened. And now the opposition criticizes a system which is making us more money than they ever made for the people of Saskatchewan.

I'm proud to be involved in the area of gold development in the province, Mr. Speaker. We now have development in northern Saskatchewan. Gold-mining companies, small resource companies, junior resource companies based in Saskatoon, Regina, La Ronge, Prince Albert, are now exploring in northern Saskatchewan.

We have rich gold deposits that have been discovered in the last 18 months. These will be developed because, Mr. Speaker, as you recall, we took away the back-in provision which allowed government to force themselves upon a young resource company that may have developed a gold-mine. We don't have that rule any more. We're there to facilitate the further development of our resources.

And I know the members from the North, opposite, are starting to squeal, Mr. Speaker, because they don't like reality. They don't like to hear the facts. And if they'd spend more time in their constituencies, the Northerners would tell them about the facts.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to deal with the uranium issue, because that's one that my friends from the North didn't mention, Mr. Speaker. They don't want to talk about the uranium issue any longer.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency of P.A.-Duck Lake, the uranium issue is important. In the city of Prince Albert, over 200 families rely directly on the mines for pay cheques. And hundreds of other families, Mr. Speaker, rely on the service industries that serve that mega-industry in northern Saskatchewan.

And I can hear the member from Cumberland trying to drown me out, Mr. Speaker, but I intend to speak, and I intend to tell his constituents what he is doing down here, which is virtually nothing, Mr. Speaker, to help them in northern Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, here's the situation in uranium mining. We still have more than \$600 million of taxpayers' dollars invested in northern Saskatchewan in the uranium mines by the former administration. I'm in favour of uranium mining, Mr. Speaker. I consider myself a Northerner, and I'm familiar with the industry. I'm familiar with the benefits of the industry. I would have preferred, however, if the private sector had been invited to participate in the investment, because, Mr. Speaker, when the investment was entered into, the NDP government relied and forecasted that we would now be selling uranium at \$75 a pound. We're now selling it at \$15 a pound, Mr. Speaker. So obviously the taxpayers are not getting a return on their investment. This is a downfall, the fallacy of government investment in the industries that were invested in.

But now, Mr. Speaker, here's what really annoys the people of northern Saskatchewan. This same political party, that saw to it that millions and millions of taxpayer dollars were invested in northern Saskatchewan, went around on all the task force meetings and assured the people that everything was safe and sound, have now changed their mind, Mr. Speaker. Now that party wants to close the mines. In fact, the member who just spoke, the member from Cumberland, personally opposes uranium mines, and has agreed to follow the policy of closing the mines down.

Now, Mr. Speaker, was that because of any sudden reality? Was that because of any facts that suddenly came to the surface? No, it isn't. It's because there's only a certain number of small pressure groups that the opposition must cater to and they can't afford to lose any of the pressure groups. So in other words, they can't afford to follow the wishes of the population in northern Saskatchewan any longer. They have to cater to the needs of little pocket groups that don't know what's going on in northern Saskatchewan. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the member from Cumberland has fallen into the trap. He's fallen into the rhetoric. He is now speaking the same rhetoric. My understanding is, that at least for now, that other member from the North is still in favour of uranium mining and is prepared to oppose his own party in the uranium mine development in northern Saskatchewan. And I hope that member has the courage to continue that position, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, continuing with the uranium exploration. As you may have heard, the Government of Saskatchewan was pleased to participate in a new joint venture exploration agreement worth nearly \$11 million. Those dollars are going to be spent in northern Saskatchewan, on line-cutting contracts, on service contracts. Northerners are going to be working in their exploration fields, exploring for further uranium. Now we know that by the end of the '80s there's going to be an increased need for uranium. There'll be a need for further development of that particular resource because we have the best resource here in Saskatchewan, the richest deposits.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite don't want to go in that direction because they think politically it's unsound. They know now that they made a mistake, but they can't go back to reality, Mr. Speaker. It appears that only one northern member stuck to his guns and opposed his own party and will end up being on the correct side. Correct in fact and correct in politics, Mr. Speaker.

I recently had the opportunity to visit the Key Lake mine, which is one of the most modern mines in the world, Mr. Speaker. A very expensive mine with 450 people employed there approximately, Mr. Speaker, and it's a very successful project. And I was glad to see the participation of Northerners in the mine, Mr. Speaker. I recall an incident walking into the control tower and there was a young lady 18 years old from Sandy Bay, Saskatchewan, and she had just been hired there and it was her first opportunity to acquire a real job, Mr. Speaker. Not a government subsidized job, but a real job in the production of uranium. She indicated that she enjoyed her job and her friends enjoyed their jobs in the mine. And when I was there, Mr. Speaker, the Northerners indicated that they wanted me to talk on their behalf to be sure that the rhetoric opposite didn't result in any closure of the mines, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Cumberland is asking about percentages. Well, I'll tell him about percentages in the uranium mines, Mr. Speaker. The Cluff Lake mine is roughly 50 per cent Northerner. The Key Lake mine is 27 per cent Northerner. Why is it 27 per cent? It's because the Northerners have not got the proper trade to get the highly technical jobs that are existing there. One of the reason why I was in Key Lake that day, two weeks ago, was to speak to the management at Key Lake and see how the new technical school in Prince Albert can train the Northerners to acquire the jobs, and therefore build up the percentages. This was not done, Mr. Speaker, by the members opposite when they were in government. Their solution was to force companies to hire numbers. They didn't care about production. They thought, well you just hire 20, 30, 40 more Northerners, and make it up somewhere else. Don't worry that the Northerners can't really do the work that's required of them.

Mr. Speaker, the industries in the North do not believe in that, and we as government do not believe in that. And I'm proud to indicate that the P.A. technical school, which is presently under construction, has been communicating with the mining companies, and special courses are going to be available to train people in the valuable industries in northern Saskatchewan, uranium industry being one of them.

And I'm proud to say as well that there are going to be satellite schools in northern Saskatchewan which the members opposite are well aware of, because that was announced at least two years ago. And those will come on stream training Northerners for the mines.

When I was at Key Lake I also noticed other industries, the service industries that were spinning off providing jobs for Northerners. Also, Mr. Speaker, most people forget that Key Lake produces fertilizer to be used by our farmers in southern Saskatchewan. And the production of fertilizer is increasing yearly. And that is something, obviously, that's going to benefit all of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Now when we look at the development of resources, we have a history to look back on. You know, if the party opposite was someone new, someone that didn't have any kind of a record at all, well, one might think, well, gee, maybe they have a point that we've missed. But, Mr. Speaker, obviously we haven't missed the points because the rhetoric that we're hearing from the other side simply doesn't represent any connection with their record at all. Their record.

Now, the former government was into the habit of nationalizing industries. That was their solution to our unemployment problem. So they nationalized potash mines. Well, that didn't create one new job, Mr. Speaker, except on the administrative side of it in government. What a waste of resources, what a waste of money. If that money would have been used to start new industries in some way, we could see the benefits today. But it wasn't done.

Uranium mining was one of the only areas that the member opposite actually invested taxpayers' money and created new jobs. And that now happens to be the only industry that they want to close down, Mr. Speaker, which wipes out their record totally when you think about it.

Now, I listened carefully to the member from Cumberland, and in spite of his rhetoric, I want to remind the House that he is a northern member, and should be aware of the facts in northern Saskatchewan.

(2000)

But I didn't hear many facts, Mr. Speaker, I heard a lot of rhetoric. From listening to the member, it sounds that things were so rosy before the change in government. Like, it was a real success story in northern Saskatchewan. He quotes a 95 per cent unemployment rate. Last year he quoted 85 per cent. Mr. Speaker, I used to go in northern Saskatchewan in those years and I saw the same unemployment. The only people that were employed were people like the member from Cumberland, who were employed by the DNS as government hacks. They were the ones with the jobs, Mr. Speaker, not the real Northerners.

Now, what are the Northerners really saying, Mr. Speaker? What are the Northerners saying? The Northerners, Mr. Speaker, are saying that in this budget, as in your last budget, we can see the building of planning for the future.

We need to be educated to compete in the world markets. We need to be educated to compete in Saskatchewan for the valuable jobs in our uranium mines or gold-mines. We're doing that in the budget, Mr. Speaker. The Northerners are saying, well, the future is in resource development. That's where we have to train our people, have to get them involved in service industries so they can serve the growing development in the North.

The people in La Ronge are saying that tourism last year was up nearly 20 per cent in expenditures. People are coming to the North because there is tourism in the North that we haven't tapped, Mr. Speaker. So they're saying that the future looks bright in the tourism industry.

What the Northerners tell me as well, Mr. Speaker, is that it is indeed unfortunate that members that represent the North are telling all of Saskatchewan and all of western Canada how awful things are in the North. The people in La Ronge are telling me that it would be more beneficial to business in La Ronge and area if the people, if the members from the North, painted a better and more positive picture of the North.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that the members that represent northern Saskatchewan are not thinking positively and constructively. I listened to the member from Cumberland and tried to pick out one constructive criticism, something constructive with a solution. I heard nothing. All it was was the same rhetoric we've heard for two years, over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, I'm convinced that the speech that someone prepared for the member was probably prepared before the budget came down. So there is no wish even to look at reality and determine whether there is anything in the budget that is good for northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Now I have to deal with another point, Mr. Speaker, which was brought up by the member from Cumberland. He had the audacity, Mr. Speaker, to mention wild rice. Last year, for the first time in the history of northern Saskatchewan, 1 million pounds of wild rice was produced in northern Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DUTCHAK: — Mr. Speaker, before the government changed in 1982, the wild rice industry was almost non-existent in northern Saskatchewan. Our government took an active role in starting and getting that industry on its feet, Mr. Speaker.

Just after 1982 we were pleased to participate, to assist in the financing, of the wild rice processing plant in La Ronge, Saskatchewan, which is the first of its kind in northern Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that's progress, and that particular plant is operating full tilt since it was built.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite the media or anyone that happens to be watching and heard what the member said, to simply go to La Ronge and ask the wild rice producers association what they think of the former government as opposed to this government in the field of wild rice.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing the Northerners are telling me — which is no different than the people in Prince Albert-Duck Lake — the people in the North are saying, all we ask from government and elected members is honesty; that's all we want.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member from Cumberland has just stood up and indicated that I failed to show up, that I ducked out of a meeting that took place in La Ronge. Mr. Speaker, that particular meeting, I did organize it. There was a request to me by some Northerners to organize that type of a cabinet delegation into northern Saskatchewan. It's something that I have developed a policy on. I intend to do more of that.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite was aware of why I didn't show up at the meeting. As this House knows, Mr. Speaker, I'm involved in constitutional talks on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and the people of Saskatchewan on aboriginal affairs. And, Mr. Speaker, the federal government had set a date in Toronto where my presence was required.

Mr. Speaker, I have explained this already to people in northern Saskatchewan; in fact, my explanation appeared in *The Northerner*, which is a northern paper. And yet, Mr. Speaker, the member from Cumberland rises to his feet and indicates that I ducked out without a proper explanation of what happened. Mr. Speaker, I think that's a sad reflection on the type of straightforwardness that's being asked for by the people in northern Saskatchewan, because they've asked for honest representation and representation that provides the full facts.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the day in La Ronge . . . I should talk about the day in La Ronge because it was a successful day, Mr. Speaker. Other ministers were there discussing our issues in northern Saskatchewan, because it was around the time when the budget was being worked on and we wanted to see what the potential for northern Saskatchewan was.

We'd been working on a number of things in the resource sector, which is now producing results, Mr. Speaker, but we're looking at other things. We're looking at manufacturing and processing. As I indicated before, we've played an instrumental role in getting the wild rice industry on its feet. It's now producing jobs in northern Saskatchewan and spin-off benefits to Northerners. We want to look for more things. Like that, Mr. Speaker. That's why we were there.

But, unfortunately, the member from Cumberland thought that he and a little group of political pressure people were going to monopolize the ministers' time all day in La Ronge. And, in fact, the member asked me about the last edition of *The Northerner*, and I think it really proves my point. One of the representatives of the member's pressure group indicates that . . . I was talking about the fact that a small group, a pressure group, will never own the cabinet of this government as they did with the former administration. Well, this individual writes back and says in the paper, I can't see anything wrong with that. If it qualifies me for exclusive ownership on Lawrence Yew, then so be it. Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the member opposite and I want to indicate to the individual who wrote this letter that I will not be owned by any individual group or individual, and neither will any of my colleagues. Because, Mr. Speaker, that kind of ownership means that our hands would be tied to deal for the good of the North as a whole, and that's what we're intending to do, Mr. Speaker, not for any particular little pressure group.

Now, let's look at the Prince Albert area in relation to the budget. We saw a budget last year

which brought forth innovative ideas for the growth of business, resource development. We started on the right direction, Mr. Speaker,. Now this year we've extended that to a five-year plan which indicates that the people can look and see what we're going to do for the next five years in education, health, and so on. And the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake, Mr. Speaker, asked for that. They want to see what is coming in the future so they can plan ahead. They want to make sure that government simply isn't throwing money at every little problem that comes up, or any little pressure group like the members opposite like to do. We want to find the real solutions to some difficult problems, and these problems aren't exclusive to Saskatchewan. In fact, we've been blessed with fewer problems or problems in less magnitude than some of our other neighbours.

But, Mr. Speaker, these changes and directions are necessary if we're to ever be in a position of competition in the world market-place. We know we've fallen behind in the last 10 years because other economies seem to have become more productive than us; and what we need is innovation. And I'm confident, Mr. Speaker, and I share with the member from . . . One of the members from Saskatoon indicated that she doesn't refer to Saskatchewan people as ordinary people like the opposition does and I agree with her. There's nothing ordinary about Saskatchewan people. Saskatchewan people originate from pioneers that came to this province with nothing going for them other than the fact that they had freedom and the ability to individually work hard and get somewhere. And for a period of time, that worked, until the former government dampened down that spirit, Mr. Speaker. I think this government is trying to revitalize that same pioneer spirit that built this province. And these days we need that type of spirit to conquer some of the problems because we know in the future our challenge is to adapt to what's needed in the world market-place. And that's where we're going in education, Mr. Speaker, and industrial development.

Now, in Prince Albert, where I represent half the city and the area surrounding, the Duck Lake area, the farming area and so on, the things that are important are education and, therefore, the technical school is well under way. It's shown in this budget as well as last year's budget. The technical school is basically a pet project of mine, Mr. Speaker, because ironically during my by-election campaign, my people, the people in P.A.-Duck Lake, were promised that this Conservative government would never deliver on that technical school. And now I'm sure it gives great pain for the NDP members across to drive by and see the steel going up, and see the building progressing quite nicely.

But late the NDP spokesmen in the area came up with another one, Mr. Speaker. They're now saying, the Tories are building it, but we would have built it anyway. And that seems to be their latest line, Mr. Speaker, and I know it give some pain to the members opposite to know that the building is progressing along very well. It's our own design, double the size that the NDP even talked about, and it certainly is going to convert Prince Albert into an educational hub of half of the province, Mr. Speaker, and I'm proud of that.

We're fortunate as well, Mr. Speaker, to have a senior citizens' high-rise under construction, and that was shown in last year's budget. It's nearly complete now and, of course, the members opposite thought they had a monopoly on the seniors issues and forgot that they really hadn't done anything for seniors in the past 10 years, but they remember that someone told them about Medicare and that Medicare was good for seniors, so they figured they had a monopoly on that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we, in the last year, have developed the home repair program for seniors, the grants of up to \$1,000 so seniors can repair their own homes. As housing minister, I was pleased to announce and develop that program. That has also been renewed in the budget and that will continue, Mr. Speaker. It's budgeted for.

In Prince Albert as well, the expansion of the SaskTel building is well on schedule, and it's another major capital works on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan — a required building.

And of course, we have a pulp mill, Mr. Speaker, which is functioning quite well. That, incidentally, was opposed before construction by the members opposite and that was built by the former Liberal provincial government. But it has provided Prince Albert with a real backbone, not a government backbone, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite would like to see. This is a real industry providing real jobs, making a real profit developing our resources. And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to work towards further development of those types of resources for real jobs.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to welcome the new member from Thunder Creek and in a sense, he and I have something in common. I was elected in a by-election, as he was, in this term, and in a way, I suppose we're like political weather-vanes. We do see how the government is doing, and whether the old story about governments losing in by-elections is true or not, and we found that in Saskatchewan it's an exception, because we have an exceptional government doing an exceptional job. And therefore I'm pleased to welcome the member to this exceptional group.

Now, I just want to end off, Mr. Speaker. Of course, I'm going to support the budget because it shows innovation. It shows everything that the people of Saskatchewan have been asking us to look at. But I really want to indicate, as well, that the members opposite have a bit of a problem this time, this spring in this Assembly, when they're talking about why they think our budget is no good, and why you think that we haven't done anything good since we've been elected.

They have two problems, Mr. Speaker. One is they have a number of candidates that have now been nominating and are sort of floating around Saskatchewan trying to scare a lot of people into voting for them. And while they're scaring these people, Mr. Speaker, they're slipping up, I guess, slipping into a rare moment of honesty and stating some NDP positions.

Mr. Speaker, therefore we have the candidates such as the one in Thunder Creek that indicated that she couldn't understand what the private sector ever did for us in the past years, and that government needed to invest more. And, Mr. Speaker, I do believe that our people in Saskatchewan, who believe in the private sector, would be interested in hearing that.

(2015)

And the second problem that the opposition has, Mr. Speaker, is that we can look over the border to the east of us into Manitoba and see how the NDP would do it if they were here. Well, Mr. Speaker, in recent days we've seen user fees, because you can't give any royalty holidays to produce wealth to the taxpayers because that would be providing a profit to big business, Mr. Speaker. So instead, we'll just tax the sick people. That's the NDP solution, Mr. Speaker.

Then, we can look at their deficit. And of course, we can't streamline government in any way. We can't demand better efficiency because that would upset certain labour leaders. So, therefore we might as well have a bigger deficit and a lower credit rating, and that is what's happening in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

So, we have a falling economy in Manitoba, and a rising economy in Saskatchewan. But what does that indicate, Mr. Speaker? It indicates that someone's policies obviously are showing returns.

Mr. Speaker, it's no accident that Saskatchewan has a low unemployment rate, and we'd like to see it lower. It's no accident, Mr. Speaker, that we have new industries, such as the Husky Oil

upgrader and the Co-op upgrader in Regina, prepared to locate in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it's no accident that we've dug 3,000 new oil wells in the last year. It's no accident, Mr. Speaker, because those things simply would not happen if the NDP were in government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to this House and to my people in Prince Albert-Duck Lake that I attempted to be as positive as I can, and I will be continuing to communicate with them in all areas of government.

But I think, Mr. Speaker, the danger we have is that the opposition must be answered to on occasion, because they are again taking the liberty afforded to them in our democracy of telling people partial truths and, in fact, twisting reality. Twisting reality, Mr. Speaker. After all, this is the same party in power now that was supposed to take medicare away.

And I'm concerned. I'm concerned about the seniors. I'm concerned about the people that may not catch all the news clips. I'm concerned about people that still may be swayed by these people. And therefore, I have, in my talk today, taken it upon myself to clarify the issues, at least in relation to northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Because I think it's politically improper to have the northern members simply take a totally negative position on northern Saskatchewan, because it doesn't do the North any good to chase Southerners away from not going there to enjoy tourism, to invest money into resource development, and to do business with Northerners.

And in my position as northern affairs minister, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be trying to mould that relationship. I'm going to be trying to get people in southern Saskatchewan more knowledgeable as to what's available in the North, and vice versa. Because, with the proper partnership, and by lifting the Iron Curtain like we did when we demolished the DNS, Mr. Speaker, there is so much more we can be in northern Saskatchewan. And we will be, Mr. Speaker. And I, therefore, support the budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. FOLK: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure this evening to also enter into the budget debate 1985. And I also would like to join many of my colleagues in welcoming the newest MLA, the newly elected member from Thunder Creek.

Also I'd like to congratulate the Minister of Finance for his fine budget address that he delivered last Thursday evening. Mr. Speaker, it was a budget that was very comprehensive, very down to earth, and very forward-looking, and probably the best budget that has ever been delivered in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I might point out that it is quite different from stated NDP policies that have come to the fore in the last few years. I speak of such policies as the moratorium, on nursing home construction. I speak of such policies as the closure of the mines up North. I speak of the policy of the NDP that they would reinstate the gasoline tax on gasoline.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I think I would like to give a little message to my NDP friends, kind of one of those good news and bad news type stories. And it relates to their policy to put back the tax on gasoline. They announced that a couple of years ago, and last night I talked to a person over the phone, the first one ever that went along with that policy. She thought it'd be a great thing to put that gasoline tax back on.

So, after I talked to her on the phone for about half an hour or so, Mr. Speaker — and I can mention that was the good news for the NDP — gave her the views on what the NDP have done in many areas, I said to her, I hope you keep all that into consideration if you're ever going to vote NDP. And she said: "No, I never did mention that I'd vote for those guys again."

Mr. Speaker, as has been outlined many times, the 1985-86 budget has a theme, "Partners for

Progress.” And it consists of four very vital corner-stones. The number one corner-stone, in my opinion, is the employment development. It’s the number one issue in Saskatchewan, across Canada, and, indeed, across the world. Even though that our province has the best rate of employment growth and the lowest rate of unemployment, certainly it’s an area that deserves our heartiest attention.

Agriculture, if you’ll pardon the pun, is the bread and butter of our economy here in Saskatchewan and one that is totally vital to our province.

And, Mr. Speaker, the other two areas of these corner-stones, health and education, according to the B.N.A. Act that came down in 1867, these two priorities or areas of jurisdiction for any provincial administration are the most important and vital, and I think it’s the two areas that concern every citizen in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to elaborate a little bit in the area of employment development, over the next five years a three-part strategy will be followed. First, a major emphasis will be placed on education and skilled training. The education endowment fund is being set up to address this. Second, to help young people find that all important first job, employment opportunities will be created through to employers and through government capital projects. Third, to ensure a stable base of permanent employment, the government will continue to promote longer-term economic development. And to address the second and third components of this strategy, a five-year, \$600 million employment development fund is being established.

In 1985-86 this fund will provide \$50 million for employment incentive programs which is a 50 per cent increase in funds to support 15,000 jobs, and also \$70 million for longer-term initiatives, including a new nine and five-eighths per cent program for small business. In addition to the new employment development fund, the ongoing \$1.2 billion capital program of the government and crown corporations will support 9,000 full-time jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I’ve made mention earlier to the nine and five-eighths per cent for small business, and certainly my colleague, the Minister of Tourism and Small Business, will be announcing details of this later in the week. But I think it’s just one very important program for our most vital industry in Saskatchewan, and that is the industry of small business, and one vehicle for employment development that is so essential. And I think with the nine-and five-eighths program that will be announced, that stability for those small businesses to pursue employment development will be very integral.

Also incorporated in this is the recently announced multi-purpose facility for Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, I was born and raised in Saskatoon, and since the time I was about 15 years old, the need was identified there for a new arena, a new multi-purpose facility for our city of Saskatoon. It came to the forefront on many occasions. Once I remember in 1976 where it was brought forward but not gone ahead with, and then of course in the last year or two at the excitement over the NHL possibly coming to our province. Mr. Speaker, when that announcement was made by our Premier and the mayor of Saskatoon on Friday, it was accepted almost 100 per cent with open arms. It’s a project that will employ many people in construction there, many people in the spin-off benefits, and spin-off industries, and will indeed serve our city and the northern part of Saskatchewan for many, many years to come, hopefully well in excess of 50 years.

And also, Mr. Speaker, when our Premier did announce that program, he announced that it is in partnership with the city of Saskatoon. And the importance we put on working together with communities, which I think is evident in the budget for this year of 1985 when the Minister of Finance mentions many times that consultation is so vitally important, especially in these next five years.

Mr. Speaker, also, the second corner-stone is agriculture. And there’s a two-part strategy. The first is a short-term financing assistance. The Agricultural Credit Corporation will be writing

down loans that have been taken out between 1980 and 1983 from 14 to 12 per cent, and 1,000 farmers will benefit from that.

The second part of that will be the farm purchase program and will be extended for one more year, which should bring the total number covered under that to 5,800.

The third part of the short-term financing assistance will be an extensive new program of loan guarantees to get the crop in this coming year. The program will offer guarantees of loans up to \$200,000, and at least 1,500 farmers will benefit from that program.

On the longer-term aspect, to remain competitive, we must undertake a major program of research and innovation. With this in mind, a five-year, \$200 million agriculture development fund is being established to focus the efforts of government and industry on productivity improvements.

In total, the funding increase to agriculture-related programs this year is nine and five-eighths per cent increase.

Mr. Speaker, the third corner-stone of the budget just recently announced is health care, and in this a five-year, \$300 million health capital fund is being established. The fund will permit a major program of hospital and nursing home renovations to proceed at unprecedented levels over the next five years.

Mr. Speaker, if I could take us back and comment from the Minister of Finance's budget address last Thursday, I among many other people knew that the NDP neglected a lot of areas in their 11 years of government. But when the Minister of Finance said last Thursday night this quote that I am about to read, I was really shocked. And I quote:

The average useful life of a hospital building in Saskatchewan is about 60 years. But, at the rate they were being renovated or replaced by the (NDP), the average hospital would have had to last 125 years!

Mr. Speaker, I think that is a good gauge on the priority that the NDP previous administration put towards health care in our province.

The next paragraph there, and I'll quote again:

Special-care home construction also suffered serious neglect. Between 1977 and 1982, only 142 new beds were added, despite the fact that the need for new facilities continued to grow. This was a particularly serious omission, given the rapid aging of our population.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health today made some announcements up in Saskatoon that have to do with my constituency as well as others in our great city. At the University Hospital it was announced that a \$23 million program will be announced to add two new floors to the University Hospital; \$50 million will be spent to renovate St. Paul's Hospital; and, in 1988, construction will commence on a brand new city hospital for the neighbourhood of a \$100 million commitment.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency of Saskatoon-University, I had the pleasure to attend the opening of the Children's Rehabilitation Centre last year, late last year. Mr. Speaker, that is another program that was put in by this government, in consultation with the Kinsmen Foundation and the Saskatoon Board of Education. A prime example, once again, of consultation and results ensuing.

Also, Mr. Speaker, last month I went to the Lutheran Sunset Home where they had the 30th

anniversary of their home. Mr. Speaker, I could not help but notice that the theme of that event for their 30th anniversary, their 30th birthday, was "Proud of our past, building our future", and part of that is, indeed, the announced program by the Minister of Health that they will receive also an addition to the Lutheran Sunset Home. And a program, I might also add, that has been on the books for many, many years, but finally with this government is proceeding, is a much-needed nursing home renovation and construction in Saskatoon.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when I saw that theme, "Proud of our past, building our future", I thought of 1985. It's Heritage year in Saskatchewan, and our theme for that is "Commemorating our past and building our future". So not only does our budget fit into the theme of building our future, but the Lutheran Sunset Home, in only 30 years, are also building for the future as well as the budget in 1985.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth priority item is education, and the five-year, \$400 million education endowment fund is now being established. And over the next five years, \$275 million in new funds will be added to the education budget to improve the quality of the primary and secondary school system. This amounts to about \$1,400 for every child in school. And the money will be used for enrichments to existing programs, new classroom computers, new programs for gifted students, new library facilities, programs to reduce student dropout rates, and incentives for more efficient school operations.

(2030)

As well over the next five years, \$125 million in new funds will be added to the budget for the universities. This amounts to over \$6,000 for every student at the university in our province. This will be money used for the restoration of buildings, construction of new facilities, and the purchase of new equipment. In total in 1985-86, grants to schools and universities will increase by 10 per cent.

And Mr. Speaker, being the member for Saskatoon University, the University of Saskatchewan is a vital and integral part not only of our constituency, but of the city of Saskatoon.

Just last year, the University of Saskatchewan celebrated its 75th birthday. There were numerous celebrations going on. And also, as the member for Saskatoon University, I received many comments from there. There were many people up there who were saying that our universities are seriously underfunded. Capital projects are being put on hold.

But indeed, that is not really reality when you look at the record of this government. Since we took power in 1982, I believe the first increase in operating grant that first year was 7 per cent, plus an additional amount paid for the supplemental for enrolment. The second year, last year, there was a 5 per cent increase, and we were one of only two provinces in all of Canada to increase that operating grant. And on top of that, there was also a supplement for the increased enrolment.

And Mr. Speaker, in about the second year of our office in 1983, the Geological Sciences building started construction up at the University of Saskatchewan. And in digging around in public accounts quite a few years ago, I noticed that the Geological Sciences building was first started being planned in 1975.

Mr. Speaker, in only one year after the election of the Progressive Conservative government, that project took place.

And now, Mr. Speaker, with these new initiatives that are coming with the increased grant enrolment, it solidifies the position of the University of Saskatchewan, and the community of Saskatoon, and the province of Saskatchewan.

By that, Mr. Speaker, it puts the commitment of this government towards not only education from K to 12 throughout the whole province, but at the university level, because training and education is so vitally important as the years go on in our province. And Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower for their continued emphasis on education in our province.

Mr. Speaker, now if I can, I'll turn to a few programs that have occurred in the last year in the Department of Culture and Recreation, and on new ones that will be coming up, as well as ones that will be expanded. And I will just touch on them briefly.

Mr. Speaker, for the first time ever in the province of Saskatchewan, there was a Tourism, Travel and Cultural Conference held last November in Saskatoon. And it was the first conference ever to bring together the tourism and cultural sectors.

Now, we have long-term effects on development of the arts and multi-culturalism opportunities in our province as they relate to the provincial sector. And Mr. Speaker, I might just add that the comments we received back from both sectors that were involved were very positive. Indeed, we will go ahead with another one this coming year.

Mr. Speaker, in the Sask Expo '86, the plans are developing there, and very shortly, I'll be announcing details of a \$1 million commitment of lottery funds for the biggest and most exciting employment opportunity ever for Saskatchewan artists. And that is that Saskatchewan professional and amateur artists will perform every day for the six-month show, the cultural showcase that will take place in 1986 in Vancouver.

Mr. Speaker, another new program that was initiated this past year was a volunteer recognition program. Mr. Speaker, by way of background, 27 per cent of Saskatchewan adults are volunteers in sport, culture, recreation, and heritage activities. And this relates to a country-wide average of 14 per cent that applies otherwise, so we can see that our province is definitely ahead. So the program we brought on formally recognized the outstanding contribution that these volunteers make to their communities and our province. It was the first ever done in the province and well overdue, and certainly one that we are going to continue and expand upon. And to date, more than 72 volunteers have already been recognized, with many more to come.

Mr. Speaker, another program that was instituted this past year and another one that we will be building on for the coming year is the athlete assistance program. I believe that we are the last province in all of Canada to bring in some form of athlete assistance. And I'm proud to say that under this government this sorely neglected need was once again addressed. And this past year, 337 quality athletes with up to \$1,000 to assist with their training and competitive costs.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not surprised that some members of the opposition are speaking up — the universities and scouting groups were after the previous administration for many years, but it fell on deaf ears. Mr. Speaker, also this program has worked out in consultation with the sport governing bodies, SaskSport, and we are very much in gratitude for their co-operation and certainly in anticipation of their co-operation in the future.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the heritage conservation program will be continued this coming year. So far we have created approximately 600 short-term jobs, throughout the province restoring 120 direct instructors. Approximately \$750,000 in heritage conservation grants have generated \$5 million in capital works. Significant benefit to local suppliers of building trade materials has also been realized.

Mr. Speaker, another one is the best ever program. It is a new initiative of our government this year. They have allocated in the neighbourhood of \$270,000 and this is going to be leading towards our athlete preparedness for the 1988 Olympics. This past year the Premier hosted a dinner for the Olympic athletes that took place in the Sarajevo and Los Angeles Olympics. And it

was the first time ever that we had 10 athletes that competed in the Olympic games. Certainly our government is pleased to honour them and now follow that up with the institution of the best ever program.

Also another one in the cultural side, Mr. Speaker, is the artist in residence program. We have established four of those across the province and the aim of that program is to stimulate the interest involvement and the organizational growth in the arts. And in the coming year, we expect to expand that by two or three.

Mr. Speaker, the final program that I wish to expand upon is one that I've already touched on briefly. And that is that 1985 is Heritage year in Saskatchewan. Certainly Heritage year is well under way, and it has three very significant components to it. Number one, it's the 80th birthday of the province of Saskatchewan, and thus the Heritage year component. The number two component, it's International and Saskatchewan Youth year. And the third component, it's the 100th anniversary of the North-West Rebellion.

So, Mr. Speaker, with the able leadership of Mr. Cy MacDonald, the executive director of Heritage year, they've been working feverishly, as has our cabinet committee, on preparations and plans for 1985. And to this date there's been 776 Heritage committees established, nearly 500 projects approved, nearly 200 commemorative projects approved, and over 200 youth committees established throughout the province. Mr. Speaker, I think it bodes well for a very exciting, very fulfilling year of 1985.

Mr. Speaker, with that, on the theme of Heritage year in Saskatchewan, "Commemorating our past, building our future," I think that's most appropriate. But I'll end my remarks because I alluded to earlier, that the Lutheran Sunset Home is very big on building their future. Saskatchewan in 1985 is very big on building our future with the involvement of youth and all.

And, Mr. Speaker, when we look at this budget that has just been presented last Thursday, it builds on the future of Saskatchewan and builds on it in a most positive fashion. So, Mr. Speaker, without any further ado, I will be supporting the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always an honour for me to speak on the behalf of the constituents of Morse. I want to begin by saying that I want to welcome the member from Thunder Creek to the legislature. It was and has been a privilege for me to work together with him and his family through the years — a good, solid Tory family. And I appreciate that opportunity even in the past month of working together with him.

I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance for his excellent job in the budget. I believe that he did a commendable job. I also think that in this budget there were a number of things that need to have the ministers commended who, obviously, assisted in providing access and details for the various areas that there were responsible for. And I think that they should be duly acknowledged, and I'm doing that here today.

The Minister of Finance basically said there are four features in this government that we're going to take a special look at — not that we're going to neglect the others, but we're going to take a special look at. They were health, agriculture, employment, and education. And I think that as he chose those four, and as they've been chosen by this government to receive special emphasis, I believe they actually are the four pillars of Saskatchewan social and economic life.

I want to begin by talking first of all about some things that we have done, and then go into the budget, because I think they relate. We heard an announcement of a continuation of one more year of the farm purchase program. I had the Department of Agriculture set up an analysis for my constituency, and I think it's relevant to the whole. From December 17th, 1982 till December

31st, 1984, I had 150 people in my constituency become a part of the farm purchase program. The average loan was \$104,000, and they got back in the neighbourhood of \$4,500 apiece. That is a basic for the whole province, that roughly \$4,500. But here's the interesting thing, the part that I think is interesting. For my constituency and the 12 municipalities that I have, there was \$818,000 paid out in those two years. That represents pretty close to \$70,000 per municipality, and I think that that is a very commendable part of what our government has done.

We've made it available to the young farmers. The average age is 26 years. The average value that they had was \$130,000, and \$130,000 is not the big farmer. It's not the huge farmer. It's just the ordinary kind of fellow starting out in the farming business, and I think it's one of the best programs that we've ever initiated.

I had occasion to travel through my constituency, and in the town of Morse I met some people in the banking business. They paid special tribute to the counselling and assistance program, and I said, why? Why would that be a special feature as far as you're concerned? And the people said to me, the one main feature that that provided was that the counselling provided to these young farmers who did have problems was greatly appreciated not only by the financial institutions — this one was a credit union — but also by the farmers themselves. And I think that that's a credit. Whether the lending institution accepted the provisions of the counselling and assistance in put, the farmer input from the boards, that did not impact as much as those people receiving the counselling for their financial problems. I think that's a vital asset to it.

The feeder association program that we established, I believe, Mr. Speaker, is a very important feature in the progression of an agriculture that's diversified in the province of Saskatchewan. It's slowly beginning to take hold, and when you do things in a radical way, you never get the proper impact in the right places, you've always got an over emphasis in certain areas. But the feeder association loan guarantee program is beginning to operate in the manner that I think is is very acceptable. I think it's credible, and I think that that's a very important part of our agriculture program.

(2045)

I want to mention something about agriculture that I think too many times we omit, and that's we heard criticisms of this throughout the day today, that we haven't taken off five per cent sales tax. Well I would say that every recreation centre in the province of Saskatchewan should go back and check to see what the value of the 5 per cent reduction in E and H tax was on their facilities. The electrical facilities that run their freezing plants, the electrical facilities in their lounges and throughout the whole recreational area, those are the things we said 5 per cent off. And that's, I think, a very positive thing. That affects every contribution I make as a citizen, as a charitable contribution to the maintenance of the rink facilities in my area.

Another area that I think is important to remember that 5 per cent went off is in your children's wear, your clothes for your kids. My oldest is 14, and if I buy him a jacket or whatever, he gets the 5 per cent off. Next year he won't, my younger kids will. And that's, that's a very important feature in giving a break to those people with young families.

Another thing that I think is even far greater then that, is the reduction of 5 per cent on the prototype construction in various areas. Now I think that Saskatchewan is unique in many areas, but it's unique in developing the kinds of machinery that we have for dry land farming, and putting those together — I heard more than one person tell me when I was campaigning — that we would like to have that E and H tax off on the construction of those, those types of things. And I think that's an important feature that our government has provided for lowering the cost of development in research and development.

There are many times when we try and make things work that we set ourselves out on a limb and say will this go or will that go. One of the key features that I believe our government tried

last year was the Livestock Investment Tax Credit, and I know that many people in the south-west part of Saskatchewan have used that \$25. And the announcement by the Minister of Agriculture that over \$3 million is going to be allocated for tax credit is indeed a showing of the strength of the program, and I think that that's a very good thing.

One of the things that I firmly believe in is the utilization of the water that we have and especially in the south-west part of Saskatchewan. We need more and more places to store water. We need more places to hold the water that we get, and it becomes more and more relevant to the kinds of conditions we've had in the last few years. The grants for irrigation, the 60 per cent of the \$100 an acre being paid the first year, and then 20 per cent and 20 per cent in the second and third year, are indeed good incentives for the development or irrigation in the south-west and throughout Saskatchewan.

I think one of the things that we have in the new budget that show that we need to review our programs is the expanding of the counselling assistance program. I think that that's a vital part of the development of our programs.

I also believe that research is one of the major features of any kind of agriculture program. I firmly believe that, and our government is working towards establishing more research in this area in various vital ways, and it's always been a concern of mine that this is continued. We have various things like wheat midge, the increase in the kinds of things for winter survival of rye and winter wheat. I think these are all major areas that we need to address. The increase in the development of higher quality rapeseed, canola, and various things like that, we need to develop.

One of the things that is especially related to the kinds of industry that I'm in in agriculture is the 4-H program, and I think that we need to continue to enhance that. We have obviously not done that in many years. The research station in Swift Current has done that in a small way. They've contributed major styles of grasses, types of grasses, types of forages, but in an ever-reducing kind of a budget, and I'm pleased that the Minister of Agriculture has included that as a part of the research development.

In dealing with my Constituency in a particular way, when I became the member for the Morris Constituency, I made a special commitment that I was going to have the Highway No. 43 built and paved from a town called Pambrun, Saskatchewan to the No. 19 highway. And I was out there at their agriculture night in Vanguard last Friday, and I told them that it was a pleasure for me to have the confidence of the municipalities of Glenbain and Whiska Creek in developing the kind of a road that they wanted to have.

And the people there were very kind in helping me to reach the Minister of Highways in suggesting the kind of road that they wanted, the location. And I met the mayor one day, and he said to me, "Any time you want to come into the town of Vanguard," he said, "the office key for the town is open. You have the key because you did what we wanted you to do." And I really appreciated working together with those people.

I have a number of other projects that are being suggested and are going to be completed in my seat, and I'm going to allow the Minister of Highways to elaborate on those. But I really appreciate that the Minister of Highways has taken serious some of the considerations of the Morse constituency, and I think he's done very well there.

I want to go to one of the other corner-stones of the budget, and that's the schools. The school in the rural school division of Swift Current, they asked a couple of years ago to have a new school built, and Madam Minister has given us an opportunity to work together with the school board from that school division and from the local board, and together we're going to see about putting a brand-new school up. And I'm pleased to have had a part of that in providing these people with better education and a better facility to provide that in.

I also appreciate the fact that outlying school districts are going to have a better program to present through funding that is being made available, and I think that's very, very important.

Health care has always been a very important feature in my past. I think I've probably spent a year in the hospital myself at various times, and so health care in various ways have been a vital part of my background. And I understand it from a patient point of view, and I've always appreciated when I've been able to have a doctor and have it when it's necessary. Many people did not have that opportunity.

I recall, as I was reeve of the municipality of Saskatchewan Landing, the times that people from Cabri and from the town of Cabri came down to ask for our help in developing a nursing home, as early as 1974-75. And I recall those people coming down and saying, "We need a nursing home there. We need a nursing home. We need a nursing home." And they tried to co-ordinate that so that they'd have a better kind of development in the area. And they went to my municipality, they went over on the other side of the river to Kyle, to the Speaker's constituency, and they said, "We need a nursing home. Would you be prepared to put together your municipality so we could fund one and get it going?"

And the fellow that is looking after it today, Mr. Ernie Moen, he's looked after that hospital for years and years. He told me that, he said, "You know, all of a sudden in 1975 it was just a big no. You can't get it done." And that was the moratorium on the kinds of home care that was needed for the seniors in a very special way. And I am pleased to say that through the work of the hospital board in the town of Cabri, that together with them, we're going to set up an integrated facility.

I also notice that Kyle is going to have one in the next year. So we're going to put our integrated facility in in '87-88 as the Minister announced on Friday, and Kyle, which also is going to set up an integrated facility with their hospital, is also going to get one. And I think that that's going to alleviate some of the problems.

In order to have a clear understanding of the position that the south-west is in, there is no nursing home between Swift Current and Leader, Saskatchewan, which is 100 miles. And to have this integrated facility in Cabri is going to be an added blessing to these people.

They have set up through the Hon. Minister of Housing, the work to have low-cost housing, to have various kinds of housing in the town of Cabri, as a preliminary to getting the nursing home facility or the integrated facility with the hospital.

I just received a letter recently from the R.M. of Miry Creek, which is adjacent to the town of Cabri, and they were asked for an integrated facility and a place to keep their seniors after they reach a Level IV care, and they were excited about having that kind of a facility in the area.

I just want to note some figures here on agriculture. Agriculture, in my opinion, is the single most important function of the economy in Saskatchewan. And it's shown by our government in how we handle our fiscal planning that agriculture is again taking number one priority.

We noticed it last year in programs that dealt with the way the drought was handled. And it was especially appreciated by the people in the Morse constituency, the livestock grant, the transportation grant, the well drilling grant. And I think that those kinds of things are showing to the people of Saskatchewan, that agriculture is one of the most important economic functions in Saskatchewan. 1981-82, under the former administration, the budget was \$85 million. In 1985-86 it's \$131 million. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that that shows the kind of emphasis that we want to place. In those five years we've had a 54 per cent increase in the value that agriculture will receive from the budget. And I think that's extremely important.

Another thing that I think is important is the establishment of the agriculture development fund.

I think that that's going to be a very valuable asset to the people of Saskatchewan. The agriculture department fund is going to be partly for research; it's partly for development. I believe that it's important there. Some of it will go to Sask Water Corporation for irrigation, some of the provincial government expenditures for ERDA, and some more money for individual irrigation grants.

And I just want to say that I appreciate the Minister of Agriculture developing this kind of a program to help and assist the development of one of the major areas in agriculture. In the South-west, putting water onto land is probably the most important thing that we will do. And I believe that it's the kind of thing that, through the years, we will see more and more of.

(2100)

The South-west is not only involved in agriculture; it's also involved in natural gas. And the natural gas program for rural people has developed in a very remarkable way in the South-west. We probably have the most scattered population in the province. And yet, speaking to the Sask Power Corporation people in the area, we have been able to over-subscribe to the program every year. Plus, we have been able to get signatures of people who want to have gas put into their farm homes for three years in advance. So we are already scheduled for three years from now for putting gas into the rural families' homes in the south-west part of Saskatchewan.

It comes from a number of things. The interest is there because the gas is drilled in south-west Saskatchewan. The interest is there because of the contribution that lower costs, in the heating and in the development in agriculture, have. The other interesting thing is that there were over 400 gas wells drilled in the South-west last year. And I noticed with interest an article in the Leader Post on April the 4th. And I don't know why it extracted even a mention:

Manitoba discovers oil. The Manitoba government's Oil and Gas Corp. has struck oil, the energy minister told the legislature on Monday. The energy minister said ManOil has participated in the development of two oil wells near Virden and one in the nearby Daly field. The three wells have been producing a modest amount of between 15 and 30 barrels a day in each of the past two weeks. ManOil president John Sadler said the government holds 40 to 50 per cent equity in the wells but he refused to disclose the total amount the Crown corporation has spent in the developments.

Now, I don't know whether that should go in the humour section or in the obituary section. I think that it just shows the kind of class that we have, compared to that. In 1984 we drilled 3,000. There were 400 gas wells in the South-west alone. And in 1981 and in 1982, respectively, they drilled seven and nine. That's the kind of production that they had.

I had a fellow in the oil field service industry tell me that in 1984 he paid more in wages than he grossed in 1982. And that, to me, says something about the kind of production that we've got in the South-west. Another oil field service company fellow told me, he said, it used to be that we could service. . . we had one rig in the whole South-west. That's one rig on a constant basis through the whole South-west through the year. Today they have four.

And that says something very important to me: that we have changed the policy, and we're getting some production out of things that were just lying dormant there before. We've not only increased the production; we've increased the known fields of oil reserves. How can you discover it without you going out there and looking for it? And I think that that oil royalty policy that we have is an extremely important feature, and it's an extremely important thing for the province of Saskatchewan.

I just want to outline where we are today. In April 5th, 1985, we drilled 787 wells — almost equivalent to what the NDP did in 1981. And we've only got three months down the road. And

we had 558 last year already.

You just wait till we hit next year, what this new energy program is going to do that our Minister of Energy has negotiated with the federal government, when we get our upgrader here in Regina, or when we get the upgrader built in Lloydminster. Those are the kinds of things that are really going to create economic activity in this province such like you've never seen before.

We have interesting things happen when you have an opportunity to make money. Two hundred and fifty new companies were established, and the member from Shaunavon will be clearly one of them, in oil and gas development. We have had 90 consulting business and services companies established, 2500 new jobs just from the energy field. And in my opinion that's key for the development.

What did it cost us in natural gas purchased from Alberta in the last 10 years? A billion dollars of money went into the Alberta Heritage Fund. What did we get out of it? We just burned it. We could have had it out of our own reserves because they were there; they knew they were there, and, in fact, probably the people from Medicine Hat had been sucking it out from under Saskatchewan all these years anyway.

Another area that I believe that we are showing some leadership is in the potash business. We've given permission to the Kalium potash mine to develop their . . . to increase their productivity. They're going to expand the \$100 million. The Lanigan potash mine started in '82 is going to go into production late this year. And these are all areas where development is a key part of making the economy of this province become diversified.

And what I like about the kind of program that we're developing is: agriculture is mixing with oil; oil is mixing with potash; potash is mixing with agriculture; and that intertwining of the economy is going to give us an extremely important and stable kind of an economy. And I think that that's extremely important when we measure the value of one against the other.

The former administration — what they did is they said: we will exclude one. The oil industry was just about nothing under their regime or administration. And what we have today is a total change . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I hear the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg telling me that the things that we're not doing — the things that we're doing are not right, but I don't like sending a billion dollars into the Heritage Fund in Alberta. He might have, but I don't, and I think that that's an important feature.

How do we work together with other administrations? I think that's an also important feature. WE have had things, as I recall, relating to the energy agreement that were written by the Leader of the Opposition, that left us in an awkward position as it relates to developing our own industry in energy, and those contracts were to the detriment of Saskatchewan, and I don't know why he did it, but that's his problem.

We, in this administration, are working together with the federal government in a different kind of way. We have put together, with the federal government, encouraging them to make the western grain stabilization payments, and our Minister of Agriculture has worked really hard to make that a personal commitment. The Prairie Livestock Drought Assistance, the payment by the Government of Saskatchewan for keeping the cows over the winter, I think that was another good thing. The flood compensation in the north-east — I think that speaks for itself.

The crop insurance, as it has developed, probably took the most major step forward that it has ever taken in the last year, and through provincial and federal negotiations they've done a number of things. Many people in my constituency did not believe that they should be funding and insurance that emphasized a lack of good farming practices, and by individual coverage you put that into the individual's responsibility of carrying that responsibility for himself, and I believe that brought the minister of crop insurance, the member from Arm River, has drawn into place

one of the best features that crop insurance will provide.

The inclusion of winter wheat, the inclusion of forage insurance as an expanded program — I know there's a lot of people in my seat have taken advantage of that. They have learned from past experiences that they need that insurance coverage for their forage, for grazing, and for their hay. They have taken a look at it, especially last year, and I know this year a lot of people have put in for coverage. And I think those are important features.

They've even worked in an unseeded acreage insurance for those acres that cannot be seeded because of flooding, which will give us an opportunity to cover those people in the north-east of the province in a far better fashion. Instead of having an initial pay-out, a blanket pay-out, the crop insurance is going to start to address that problem, and I think that that's a good thing.

Our government took and put a lot of pressure on the federal government to license HY-320, and I think that, in the future, is going to be of benefit. I don't think it's necessarily going to benefit the south-west in the dry areas, but in the parkland area I think that that's going to be an extremely important feature.

We've heard throughout the day, talking about various things, about the 5 per cent sales tax, taking sales tax off of various things. Under the initiative of the provincial government here in Saskatchewan we have asked the federal government to remove the fuel tax so that we get rebates. And I am very pleased to hear that they're going to take it off right at the bulk dealers. And I've talked to quite a few of the bulk dealers in my constituency, and they're really happy about it. They're working together with the federal government to co-ordinate that policy, and I know the farmers in my seat are going to be happy about that.

As a part of relating to my constituency, I put an ad in the paper that said that anybody who had a Farm Credit Corporation loan between April 1st of 1981 and December 8th, 1982 would have their interest reduced. I put that in the paper, and two days after the paper was out I had people coming in holding the ad in their hands and they said, "Where do I get this? Where do I go for this?" And people were pleased that they could find some place and somebody to listen to them so that they could have some interest reduced.

The federal government set up a special parliamentary committee to deal with a number of other areas. One was the removal of capital gains tax on farm land. The recommendation that the committee came up with, and I don't know what the Finance Minister is going to do with it, but that a ceiling of \$400,000 be put on. That's going to be a definite asset to the capital gains tax problem that we've had in Saskatchewan. And it's interesting to note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all of the farm groups that came to the parliamentary committee, all of them, without any one deviating, said that you could not take it all off. It wouldn't be practical, nor would it do the farming industry any good to take it all off. So they suggested that a \$400,000 limit be put on to it.

In my opinion, the second thing that they're talking about is Agribonds. In my opinion, that's a very important thing to discuss. I think that there are people that are prepared to have agriculture support itself in its own financing. If we have an opportunity to do that, I think that that will come about.

There's also some discussion about part-time farmers. Bill 31, I believe it's called; that's going to take some time to sort that one out, but I think it's going to be an asset when we get an opportunity to have these part-time farmers become classified as a regular farmer would be.

We discussed last year, as ag caucus, something that I thought was extremely important, is the kind of labelling that were on chemical cans. Chemical in the province is used very intensively and extensively, and I believe that when we had people who had problems converting it, we should have at least had the grace to put the kind of numbers that they were used to working with. And when you have people who have grown up with the imperial system having to

convert everything to metric because that's the way the stuff comes out, and not even being able to put the imperial measurements on the can, I think it was disgusting. It could cause serious accidents; it could cause serious illness to various people; and I believe that that's something that this government, together with the federal government, have brought about.

(2115)

I just want to review, for interest's sake, some of the things that I believe have been important, and I want to put the figures on. I didn't discuss figures before.

The cattle program that the provincial government put in for drought was \$13 million, and you add another 13 — it may be closer to \$14 million — that comes out to about 28, 29 million. You take the flooding from north-east Saskatchewan at 7 and a half million plus; the natural gas program, 35 million for rural Saskatchewan; you take the home quarter tax, that \$13 million; and then you take one-third of the gas tax which is probably going to accrue to the rural part of Saskatchewan, at 70 million. You add the oil field surface rights.

Now every time an oil company moves onto somebody's land, what you have is surface rights being disturbed. And the farmers in rural Saskatchewan receive \$44 million, roughly, in payments by oil companies for surface rights. Now that \$44 million is an extremely important part of those people's income. The farm purchase program through the years, two years, have put in 35 million. Moving the cattle, 1 and a half million; wells for water, in deep wells, half a million dollars; counselling and assistance, 7 and a half million. Just the provincial portion comes out to \$227 million right in the hands of the farmers of Saskatchewan.

People in the opposition say, not one thin dime for the agriculture people of Saskatchewan, not one thin dime. But there is 227 million I just read off on programs, and that doesn't even include them all. That doesn't include the ones that the federal government put in and top-loaded ours. I think those are very credible in establishing what we believe is a priority in Saskatchewan.

One of the things that I'm the most proud of that I've had involvement with is the Saskatchewan Water Corporation, and establishing it — worked together with the Minister of Energy in getting it going, together with the other members of the cabinet committee. And I believe that it is unique, that it's going to do the job far better than any other feature that we've ever had in government because it's self-motivating, which is an extremely important feature.

It's self-motivating for one primary purpose, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's because of the watershed advisory boards. The watershed advisory boards are the people that make it work. The people in the corporation who have the responsibility for management are also an extremely important part. But if we combine the two, which has not been done in any kind of a corporation in Saskatchewan before, I believe we get the technical experience, the technical know-how, with the practical experience that is necessary for development.

And it isn't only in agriculture. We've had quite a few compliments about the levels of the water in Diefenbaker Lake, for example. And I'm sure that this is the first time that that has come about. And I think that that's an extremely important feature. We've been able to maintain the levels so that irrigators next year are going to be able to take water out. Recreational facilities along the shores are going to be able to use their facilities, which they never had an opportunity to do before.

I have, in the past two months, had the opportunity to do some travelling on behalf of the federal government. And I did spend some time in the Sudan in Africa for the federal government. It was an interest in experience for me, an experience that told me a number of things about the country that I live in, and that I believe are very important for me.

I believe that what it showed to me was that I should be far more grateful for the freedoms that I

have. It showed me another thing: war can be devastating. War in any country can be devastating. But what it produced there throughout those countries is famine, people leaving their lands, people forced to flee their countries. And it made me grateful for the fact that we don't have war in this country. We have many disagreements, but we don't settle it with a gun and with food as a weapon. And I appreciate that, and I appreciate the opportunity that we have to openly debate, to openly discuss various areas of our differences.

There were probably four areas that I saw a need in Africa. The first one was obviously in food. The second one, because I was in agriculture, was water. The shortage of water — 65,000 people in one refugee camp were hauling water with a truck. The third thing was fuel, and the fourth thing was medicine. Those four features were probably the most pointed things that we saw a need in the countries in Africa. And it's not just one country, it's all of the northern countries in Africa.

What about the future of Saskatchewan? The conference board says that Saskatchewan has the fastest growth in gross domestic product in '85 with a 2.9 rate of growth. It's forecasted to grow 2.6 over the next five years, and it's tied with B.C. for the lead. Unemployment in Saskatchewan is expected to rise a little bit, but then start to go down. Why? Because some of the features that were put into place in energy, potash, agriculture are starting to take effect. Educational demand, education facilities are all a part of making that population start to go down.

And I believe that the Minister of Small Business and Tourism in his announcement at the end of this week is going to show Saskatchewan what we really mean when we say small business is the way that we're going to make Saskatchewan grow. And I believe that when he makes his announcement that the nine and five-eighths per cent interest, that he's going to expand on in this program, is going to be just as important a feature to small business in Saskatchewan as the 8 per cent money for farm purchase program has been.

And I believe that from here on with the co-operation of the people of Saskatchewan working together with us, and it's like the Minister of Finance said, it's a partnership process, we're going to be able to make this province become what we said it was going to be. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. HARDY: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure tonight to join in this debate on our 1985-86 budget. I believe, Mr. Speaker, it's one of the most innovative budgets that has ever been brought down by any government in Canada and certainly any government ever was in the province of Saskatchewan.

I'd like to speak a few minutes about a lot of things. One of the areas that we just touched a few minutes ago, by the member from Morris, was on agriculture. Agriculture in Saskatchewan has had a lot of problems over the last few years. It's had droughts, and it's had floods. It's had the wheat midge and grasshoppers. But we've got to remember it's a multi-billion dollar operation here in the province of Saskatchewan. And the government's role is to give short-term assistance, but also to give long-term planning. And that's what this budget did, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What it's done in the short term, it's give a reduction for the Agriculture Credit Corporation, for loans obtained from April 1980 to December 1983, from 14 to 12 per cent. That's a \$4 million relief.

The farm purchase program extended for another year, one of the most innovative programs that this government has — any government has ever brought in, to give 8 per cent money to farmers who want to purchase land. This would help an additional 1,800 farmers, and a total of 5,800 farmers will have benefit from this program.

The farm counselling and assistance program for farmers extended to get the crop seeded this

year. It offers loans of up to \$200,000, and this means that farmers who need financial help will be able to obtain it.

On the long term in this — on our budget there'll be major programs in research to give us the edge in better seed production, at the same time, better ways of reducing cost to farmers. To do this a five-year, \$200 million, agricultural development fund is to be established to focus on productivity and improvements.

There's been many things done over the last three years that will help farmers in the long term as well as the short term. We got natural gas to farmers, removed the gas tax from all fuels — as you know farmers travel a lot — and that will certainly be a great saving to them — almost between \$40 and \$50 million a year — removal of the E & H tax on electrical bills, just to name a few of the things that's been done to help farmers on the short and the long term.

The four corner-stones were mentioned in the budget, and another one of them would be education. Education, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is one of the major corner-stones that we feel, as a government, has to be established and kept — our education system — and we must remain committed for the years to come. A strong economy in the future coincides with an investment in education today.

We heard that local school boards and universities really needed financial help, and we realize that the people of Saskatchewan saw this as a priority. We have come through, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by removing some programs and re-allocating them into very important areas, one of those is education. We've increased funding by over 8 per cent when many thought it would have been almost impossible to do.

The next five years in education we have planned two exciting funds, the educational development fund and the university renewal and development fund. In order to commit ourselves we have asked the universities and school boards to work with us to eliminate waste and to develop accountable techniques so that the public is finally aware of where their money is being spent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker there's two or three areas that I have responsibility for that I would like to talk about. One of them is Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation. As minister in charge of Saskatchewan Forest Products, we have had many challenges since becoming government. One often forgets the benefits a smaller crown brings to the Consolidated Fund and other spin-offs. Last year the forest industry as a whole paid \$3.4 million in stumpage and cutting fees. Saskatchewan Forest Products paid \$1.4 million, Simpson Timber paid \$1.4 million, and PAPCO paid \$174,000. Saskatchewan Forest Products has, in fact, put nearly \$10 million in the provincial treasury by ways of dues since 1975. Saskatchewan Forest Products provides 560 direct jobs. It has a payroll of \$600,000 per month and creates over 700 jobs in construction and in bush operations. Saskatchewan Forest Products provides close to \$15 million in direct spin-off activity every year in the province of Saskatchewan. It also pays to the Consolidated Fund \$2.4 million in interest.

(2130)

Since many of SFP's jobs are at a good rate of pay, the provincial income tax and spin-offs from our payroll cannot be stated strongly enough. They have sales of 30 to \$40 million a year. We have redefined employment-management relationships in the crown corporations. And how we've done that — we're consulting with the lower level management, the union worker, and many of our customers in order to make this company efficient and competitive in the time when all forest industry is in a slump. Saskatchewan Forest Products' liability can prove that our government is committed to efficient crowns, and that the people of Saskatchewan should benefit from these crown corporations and not bear the brunt of inefficiency in their pocket-books.

I heard the member from Cumberland House talking about employment in the north and the lack of employment he said. And I just thought he might like to know that Saskatchewan Forest Products in northern Saskatchewan employ approximately 15 employees at Weyakwin, almost 50 at Green Lake, over 125 in bush operations, 15 at Cumberland House, 25 at La Ronge, and most of these, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are of native employment.

I've heard the opposition talk many times, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about our health care in this province. We have the best health care system in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and what we've done now, in this budget, is to make it even better.

Three hundred million dollars in health care capital fund to be spent over the next five years. That's an aggressive a program as any place in Canada. Special care homes are needed in our province to make sure the elderly, who may need this type of assistance, will have it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, almost no nursing homes were built from 1977 to 1982. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, only 142 new beds were added in all that time.

Last year it was announced that the program was well on its way, and we were to build over 1,000 new beds and renovate another 500 over the next five years. Mr. Deputy Speaker, last Friday the Minister for Health announced that this number would be exceeded. And also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my area — in the Tisdale area — they've been asking for nursing homes, special care home for many, many years up there, and on Friday he announced a 40-bed nursing home to be built in 1986-87. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is giving what the people have asked for, and that's what this government is all about. We provide where it is needed and where it's needed in there.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to go on a little more about our health care. In 1984-85 there was 328 beds under construction and 438 beds planned for '85-86. These additions were in new facilities in Duck Lake, in Goodsoil, Nokomis, and Rabbit Lake. In the 1986-87 approvals, six more communities were added. And they were included Yorkton, Tisdale, Santa Maria home in Regina, the St. Anthony's home in Moose Jaw.

In 1987-88 and '88-89, the last two years of the program, 22 more communities have been identified. The cost to the provincial government will be in excess of \$25 million over the next five years of the program. I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that tells us where we stand with health care in the province of Saskatchewan.

Just to add to that, today the Minister announced that over 30 communities outside of Regina and Saskatoon will benefit through new hospitals or renovations to hospitals. That is recognizing the need of the people in rural Saskatchewan. There will be hospital construction projects in about 20 of these communities as part of an integrated facilities program, as well as existing hospitals being placed in several communities, such as Estevan, Watrous, Watson, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Hudson Bay. At Hudson Bay, as in Tisdale, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they've been asking for a renovated hospital for the last 10 years. And I'm very pleased to be able to say today that the minister has agreed that in '86-87, a new renovation and expansion to the Hudson Bay hospital will take place. We have four young doctors in Hudson Bay, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and these doctors are part of rural Saskatchewan. And they need that type of facility to be able to practise and to maintain the life-styles that we all expect.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very proud that we've been able to announce today for 1986 and '87 an expansion and renovation to the Hudson Bay hospital, as well as on Friday the announcement of the 40-bed nursing home to Tisdale. I think that's very important, not only for my constituency of Kelsey-Tisdale, but for all the people who live in the area who will have the benefit from this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, over the last three years as a government, and certainly as the MLA for

Kelsey-Tisdale, I'd just like to reiterate a few of the things that have taken place in my constituency. And I think it's very important that I do.

One of the major things that happened up there was the expansion to the M&B plant, the aspenite plant at Hudson Bay, which was down to only 65 employees, who now employ 165 people. We had the retention of the Erwood rail line, where we have a silica sand deposit, a limestone deposit. I think it could well be, and could lead to further expansion, new industry, not only in the Hudson Bay area but in the province of Saskatchewan.

We had a new workshop and activity centre for the handicapped at Porcupine Plains to accommodate 35 people plus staff. We had rebuilding of quite a few highways. No. 3 east of Hudson Bay is under construction; No. 38 from Greenwater to Chelan under construction; and a lot of upgrading of a lot of highways, and resurfacing of some of the highways in the area.

We had retention of the rail line from Weekes to Reserve. We had primary airport status in Tisdale. We had new bridges built in three or four of the areas. We had a gymnasium at the Bjorkdale school. We had a new school and gymnasium in Archerwill. We had \$141,000 to the Tisdale Recplex. We had additional funding for Lorh Industries in Tisdale.

We had many, many grants for senior citizens. The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation had many housing units throughout the various communities in Kelsey-Tisdale. We had water works grants for Porcupine, Tisdale, Hudson Bay, and many other small communities. We had the special care home now announced for Tisdale. We had the renovation of the Hudson Bay hospital.

We have a new mall in Tisdale, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that will have, or does have, approximately 150 new jobs with 20 new businesses in it. We had the expansion of Trail-Rite industries — more jobs, Mr. Speaker. We had new libraries, museums in Prairie River. We had assistance for flooded-out farmers in the area, just to name a few of the things that's happened over the last three years. And I'm very proud to have been part of it, and very proud to be part of a government that does look after the people of Saskatchewan.

There's one other area that I always have a lot of concern about, and that's our wildlife in the province, Mr. Speaker. I live in what we call the moose capital of the world. But last year, with all our snow, and all the deep snow we had, and the severe winter, a lot of our wildlife had a great deal of problem to survive.

And I think a bouquet should be sent out to the people of the area, especially the Wildlife Federation who done a tremendous job in feeding these animals, supplying food to them where they couldn't get it. And many of them survived. And I would say maybe 75 per cent of them survived because of this type of dedication by people who donate their time and their efforts to saving our wildlife and keeping it in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I haven't got too much more to say, except I'd like to close by saying that we are one province in Canada to continue to move forward even in tough economic times. We have, over the last three years, led the nation in new and imaginative ideas and accomplishments. We have shown leadership and courage to do what is right and what will keep our province moving ahead. We are proud of our accomplishments, and we have now set our goals and direction for the years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be proud to support this budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I think we should bring a myth to the . . . Let's handle a myth that's developed in Saskatchewan in the last couple of days since the budget.

Mr. Blakeney — sorry, the member from Regina Elphinstone — and his little band seem to indicate that nobody in Saskatchewan has ever paid sales tax on used vehicles. That's the indication he has left with this House and the people of Saskatchewan.

So I phoned a dealer, and I asked him for some of his numbers. I've also talked to three or four other dealers. And he was able to quickly pull together for me his 1981-82 sales.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want you to understand what we are talking about. Vehicles that sales tax, 5 per cent, was paid to the Government of Saskatchewan in Saskatchewan: 78.57 of his total sales in the year 1981-82, he paid a full 5 per cent tax on those used vehicles he sold. I repeat, this dealership sold 78.7 of its used vehicles, not brand new, but used vehicles.

Now I had the privilege of looking at his returns that he sends into the Department of Revenue when he collects the tax. On the tax, it says, truck sold, \$10,500; \$10,000 for the truck \$500 sales tax. But on the customer's receipt, it shows truck bought, \$10,500. So the customer was not aware that he was paying sales tax on a used vehicle. Fourteen per cent of his stock he did not collect any sales tax on, 3.5 per cent of his stock was sold outside the province, and 3.5 per cent of his stock was sold to other dealers in Saskatchewan, and they would, if not sold out of the province, tax would have been collected on those vehicles.

I asked him for his 1982-83 figures, so he gave them to me as well. In 1982-83, 85.71 per cent of his vehicles he collected 5 per cent sales tax on. I repeat, '82-83, 85.71 per cent of his total sales he collected 5 per cent sales tax; 9.52 per cent of his vehicle sales he did not collect sales tax on; and 4.76 per cent of his sales were sold outside of the province, and therefore he didn't collect tax on.

What is interesting is the misconception in those members minds that nobody paid sales tax on used vehicles. In other words, it's hocus-pocus. This is one dealer's numbers, and that dealer has promised me for tomorrow he hoped to have his '83-84 numbers for me, because of his financial year being July, and I have two other dealers who are prepared to give me numbers as well — in percentage, not in vehicle by vehicle — and they indicate they are well over 65 per cent of their sales were Saskatchewan tax paid.

(2145)

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's remember in certain areas there is a shortage of newer, newer, used vehicles in Saskatchewan. I take a look at the "Black Book," better known in the industry — April 1, 1985, that's pretty well the newest dealers' book — and it indicates the prices of vehicles — a 1983 Mercury four door sedan could be anywhere from \$7,800 to \$10,610. If that vehicle was sold by this dealer who happens to bring in vehicles taxes not priorly paid in Saskatchewan, he would then sell them and include the tax on his return to the Government of Saskatchewan. So in the column it would say vehicles sold, the amount that he got for the vehicle, and the amount that is tax, but the person who bought the vehicle, his receipt would show the total price together. He may not be wise that the tax was charged or doesn't; it doesn't matter because the tax is submitted to the Government of Saskatchewan by the dealer who sold them, and, as I indicated with this particular sales lot, 78 per cent worth in '81-82 where taxes had to be collected, in '82-83, 85 per cent of the vehicles.

So let's get rid of that myth, Mr. Speaker, that no used vehicles pay tax.

The truth of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, most of the car dealers know what the vehicle was bought for, including the tax. And when people trade, they assume they get some value for some of the tax that have been paid. So in the end-run it is charged out, but now it's out front; it's not buried within the price.

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . What the member . . . You know, I've sat in this House over the years, Mr. Speaker, and listened to the opposition talk about deficits. And the member that spoke from his chair just a moment ago with some concern knows that I'm going to bring up the teachers' deficit. He discovered it, the same as the rest of us on Public Accounts, as we went through public accounts. And prior to 1977, I believe, is the correction date.

AN HON. MEMBER: — '78.

MR. KATZMAN: — '78?

AN HON. MEMBER: — '79, I'm sorry . . . (inaudible) . . .

MR. KATZMAN: — Okay, I'll accept '79 is the date that they started to fund the pension plans. Up until then, the money put in by the teachers went into the fund for teachers; a portion was paid out; the additional portion left over could be used by the Consolidated Fund. And, if it was not required additional funds from the government, the government did not put their equal matching share in; therefore, the fund was again short of money because it wasn't gaining the interest that money invested would do. And we are told in Public Accounts that since the Teachers Pension Plan came into Act somewhere over \$2 billion is the shortfall.

Now we heard the former government over talking about deficits. You know, Mr. Speaker, we heard the former government members and now the opposition talking about increases, deficits, and so forth. I've done a little bit or research — not all of the research that I wanted to get completed. And would you believe, Mr. Speaker, from what I understand, when the NDP lost government in Saskatchewan to the Conservative Party, they had indebted Sask Power 117 per cent of its equity. In other words, for every dollar of equity Sask Power had, \$117 of debt was there. Those are facts that you can check through the PURC people.

Now what we're saying is that they used that money — and I think that the Premier has indicated prior that they took tax money out of the power corporation and others, transferred it to the Consolidated Fund. But let's not only take that one. They took other accounts, and we can take, I believe, it is SaskTel, that it was 97 per cent in debt, and committed debt of their equity when they lost government.

Now you know, Mr. Speaker, I think last year in Crown Corporations, that it was discovered that 40 cents out of every dollar you pay on your power bill goes to pay off interest on the money that was borrowed by the former government. And as they borrowed money, they indebted the corporation rather than taking out the profits and paying off some of the indebtedness. They declared dividends to the Consolidated Fund, therefore attempting to balance their books, as far as the people were concerned.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, from my understanding there has never been a balanced budget in Saskatchewan since I got elected, and I don't know what kind of mathematics that the former members did, but they seem to have been able to do it very good. I'm told about all these magic increases that went on in Sask Power and all the rest of it, so I did some checking on the gas rates history in Saskatchewan.

When the NDP were in power in 1975 and all the years thereof, the amount of increases that were put onto Sask Power and so forth, it was interesting to note that sometimes at election they forgot about an increase. 1975, the figures I have show that a farm residential went up 47.2 per cent. 1976, in July, 20.3 per cent; 1977, in August, 15.3; June of 1979, 7.0; August in 1979, 3.0. And it's interesting to note in the election year, 1978, no increase.

I wonder what happened? Did they fall asleep at the switch? Or were they scared they might get in trouble if they were honest with the taxpayers and showed what happened?

1980, February, 4.6; September, 8.7; November, 14.3. Now that's three increases all in one year. 1981 — now this is just for the farmers, this has nothing to do with anybody else — 1981, 5.8 per cent in May; and in July, just a few months later, 5.6 per cent.

1982, February — now, just for the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, let me show you what happened — in 1982 you were honest with the people of Saskatchewan, not like in '78. In '78 you had no increase. February, 1982, sit in a cabinet table behind closed doors, 18.17 increase. And it wasn't much later and you weren't government. You know, you finally came out from behind those cabinet doors and let people know what you were doing.

Now let's look and see what you did to the commercial consumer. Oh, I should, of course, tell you what the Conservatives did. Thirteen per cent in July of '83 and 3.3 in September of '84. And the one I missed, of course, was '73-74, the combination was 17.2. So let's, you know, kick out some numbers.

In small commercial business in '75, 51 per cent; '76, 22.6; '77, 17.1; '78, you didn't put an increase in again. And I wonder if it was an election year or something. 1979, 6.9; '79 again, 3.4; 1980, 4.6, 9.3, and 14.1.

Basically, what this shows, Mr. Speaker, is that the NDP continued to raise rates since 1973, as I've indicated with the figures I have.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Tell us about PURC.

MR. KATZMAN: — Oh, the member from Saskatoon Eastview wants me to talk about PURC. Well, I'll just save that for a minute. Now, let's make some honest comparisons. Let's compare apples and apples instead of apples and oranges.

Let's assume that the NDP became government in Saskatchewan. The average hourly income was 3.4 cents an hour. So, to get a telephone, you worked one hour and 22 minutes. And that was the cost for a telephone for a month. In 1972, you worked one hour and 14.7 minutes for a telephone. In 1973, you worked one hour and 10 minutes. Following the election in '75, it jumped up a little bit. It went to one hour and 3.7 minutes. In August, 1982, when the Conservatives are government, you worked 45 minutes for that same monthly telephone. So the hours of work that you must put in for that service has dropped from one hour and 22 minutes under the NDP when they became government, to when the Conservatives became government, 45 minutes.

So now we're comparing apples and apples, instead of apples and oranges like you people like to try. Mr. Speaker, I've got some other numbers I would like to use today. But before I do, I think I'm going to adjourn debate so that I can bring in more numbers.

But I'd like to comment on a couple of announcements made in the last couple of days by the ministers.

Now I know that the NDP did not like the idea of the Government of Saskatchewan saying, Saskatoon, we're going to help you build your hockey rink, 'cause it's not Regina, and that's where all the NDP like to put money, was only in Regina. You know, Saskatoon used to have eight members, but they got nothing. Saskatoon's got 10 members, plus two around it, and they're getting their fair share for the first time in history.

Now let me remind them — you know what hurt the most, Mr. Speaker, was not that the funds were going to be put into the rink, but the control was left to the local government. That's the part that hurts. They can't dictate to the local government, you gotta do this, you gotta do this; that's how they did things.

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No, the Premier, when he announced it with the assistance of the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, said, here's the sharing agreement, you make the decisions, but let's get the job done.

You know, I'd like to talk about the hospitals announced today, but that can wait till next day when I go to speak, and seeing as I see the time of the day, Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:57 p.m.