

April 23, 1985

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

**Hon. Mr. Domotor:** — I give notice that I shall on Thursday move first reading of a Bill, an act to amend The Tax Enforcement Act.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Thursday move first reading of a Bill, an Act to amend The Department of Social Services Act.

**Hon. Mr. Domotor:** — I give notice that I shall on Thursday move first reading of a Bill, an act to amend The Municipal Tax Sharing Potash Act.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome, or to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the legislature, the French Ambassador to Canada, Monsieur Cabouat, and his wife who are sitting in the Speaker's gallery, and we had a dinner last night. We had an enjoyable time talking about the relationship between our province and the country of France. The Ambassador has been in Canada now for one year, and this is his first opportunity to come into Saskatchewan — I believe, the first French Ambassador to come in here since 1981.

We look forward to him coming back again, and we only wish him the very, very best in the province of Saskatchewan and, indeed, in his country. We welcome him here.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, may I add my welcome to those of the Premier to His Excellency, Ambassador Cabouat and Madam Cabouat. They, as the Premier will be aware, are visiting the province and going up to Cluff Lake later as the previous visit of the Ambassador in 1980 involved such a visit. We are glad to welcome them to our province and wish that their stay be a pleasant one and an exciting one.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Rousseau:** — Monsieur le Président, c'est un honneur pour moi de vous présenter, ainsi que tous les Membres de cet Assemblé, un personnage très distingué, son Excellence, l'Ambassadeur de France, Monsieur Cabouat. Je sais que c'est votre première visite à Saskatchewan, et j'espère que vous reviendrez souvent pour nous visiter. Bienvenue à Saskatchewan.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Bacon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With pleasure this afternoon, I introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, a group of five students from the native survival school, which is located in the heart of Nutana on Broadway Avenue in Saskatoon. I will be meeting with them at 3 o'clock for pictures, and at 3:15 we will go for refreshments. I ask all members to join and welcome them here, please.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Weiman:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a very great pleasure and a special treat that I introduce to this Assembly this afternoon, probably the greatest group of young adults in all of Saskatchewan, that are seated in the Speaker's gallery. I don't say that only because they happen to live around the corner from my house and are frequently found on my lawn, but I say it with special pride because my daughter is also from that class-room. There are 34 students. They are from Father Vachon school. They are accompanied today by their teachers, Mr. Bob Kerr, Mr. Charlie Farwell and Mr. Tim Prytula.

I look forward to meeting with them after question period and after your tour where we can chat more informally. And I am sure that you find the proceedings of the House most informative. So I will see you later on.

I ask that you join in welcoming them with me.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like today to introduce to this House two leaders that have had a great deal of input into the youth of this province, and in particular into the students that are first class out of the constituency of Fairview in Saskatoon.

The two leaders we have with us today are in the Speaker's gallery, Mr. Speaker, and that is the president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the general secretary, Mr. Mel Lofstrom and Mr. Frank Garritty.

I think it is important to note this year, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Frank Garritty, who is completing his term as president of the Saskatchewan teachers' Federation, is going on to the Canadian level to take on a leadership position at the Canadian level. We're going to miss him in this province for the short term, but we know that he's always going to come back to Saskatchewan when his term is completed at the Canadian level.

I would ask all members to welcome them, and in particular that Mr. Garritty and wish him well in his new endeavours in Ottawa come July.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Bacon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I have an opportunity to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, a group of 17 students that attend Bishop Murray elementary school in the constituency of Saskatoon Nutana. They are accompanied by teacher Beverley Klein; Tillie Schneider, who is the school secretary; Del McLoughlin; and Debra Hunt from Holy Cross High School.

I ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to the Assembly, and I also will be meeting with you at 3 o'clock for pictures and refreshments.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Construction of PCB Treatment Plant in Regina

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Yesterday, Mr. Minister, in your absence, we addressed a question to the Premier complaining, in part, that last week your department took two days to tell the people of Saskatoon about a PCB spill in their city.

Last evening we find your department has secretly approved the construction of a PCB treatment plant in Regina. I want the minister to explain why his department gave approval for the construction of this hazardous waste treatment plant in the middle of an urban area without holding public hearings or even notifying the public that this project was under consideration.

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In answer to the hon. member's question that he said about secretively permitting a processing plant to be located in Regina, I would like him to know that we've been working with the city of Regina for the last 6 or 7 months in regards to drawing up the necessary requirements to even allow them, or permit them to be located in this city.

This same company come in in 1982, or 1983 rather, and they did a test pilot project for Sask Power Corporation with all the news media there, including the city of Regina, the department of Environment Canada, the Department of the Environment of Saskatchewan, and it was carried out under those auspices. In 1984 they have done 100,000 litres for Sask Power corporation, a very low contaminated oil. It's 0.05 of 1 per cent PCB content. This oil comes from the flushing of transformers after PCBs within it have been taken out, then they've put new oil in it. When the second round comes around, this oil is used or taken out. It has a low content of PCBs. They decontaminate the oil, and we use it again. It's a re-use of the oil instead of putting it into storage or holding it or destroying it.

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. It was secret in that your deliberations — and you conducted yourself in such a fashion as to carefully exclude any public input. I have here, Mr. Minister, a letter dated March 12th from your deputy minister, from the director of the land protection branch, Mr. Clark, to PPM Canada Inc., the owners of the facility, and it says:

Based on our review of the project information, and on the comments we've received from other interested parties, we feel that the process can be conducted safely without subjecting the environment, or the public, to any undue risks.

Rather than describe the chemistry of what's happening, I'd ask you, Mr. Minister, to deal with the policy and tell us who the interested parties were that your department consulted with prior to giving this hazardous waste treatment the green light. Since the plant will require the transportation of hazardous wastes through the streets of Regina, in and out of an urban area, do you not think the residents of Regina might have qualified as interested parties?

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member says, should the residents have been notified of such a project? It was taken to City Hall. The city of Regina have been involved constantly with this here proposal for a plant in here. This plant has, over the last year in 1984, processed 100,000 litres of SPC sites in the city of Regina. They've been transporting within the city on a constant basis fully realizing that it's .05 of 1 per cent contamination of PCBs. So it's a very low contamination, but it can't be reused again until it's decontaminated entirely. So that's the reason that they're using or going through this process.

And in regards to secretive — I had a minister's order here, that would be issued should the plant be allowed to go ahead, that has been worked out with the city of Regina. And I'm not sure that the proponents would even go along with this, but this is only a proposal to this point.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well, Mr. Minister . . . New question, Mr. Speaker. It is bizarre that you would allow a plant which is this controversial, and which has chemicals this dangerous, without an environment impact statement. And since that seems unnecessary, Mr. Minister, I assume that you will be forthcoming with answers to the following questions: what quantities of PCBs are to be treated in this plant each year; what hazardous wastes will be created as a result of the treatment plant and in what quantities; and where will those wastes be stored; and how will they be shipped?

Since no environmental impact statement seems to have been necessary before you gave the consent, I assume, Mr. Minister, that answers to those questions will be readily forthcoming.

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Mr. Speaker, it would be the maximum — I have to read it here — of 5,000 imperial gallons on site at any one time. It would all be contained within a building. There would be no emissions; there would be no . . . Any residue left would be collected and stored on site, which would be very little.

Basically, I can read it all to you if you'd like. I mean, I have the entire order if you'd like. But it's 0.05 of 1 per cent contamination of PCBs. There would be 150,000 gallons per year to be treated approximately in the city. On site and, as you know, scattered all over the province there's a lot of it being stored. I could go back to A. L. Cole in Saskatoon have about 50,000 gallons they've been storing there for a considerable length of time.

Pretty near every storage site by SPC has some on site. They've been cleaning it up over a period of years. I guess that's about all I can say to that.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. According to press reports, PPM Canada Inc. says that the Regina plant will be its Canadian headquarters when construction is finished. That suggests that all the work it does in Canada may well be done at the headquarters in north-east Regina. Is north-east Regina then to become the dump grounds for the treatment of PC-contaminated material from all across Canada?

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question, this minister's order that is proposed and will be presented to them should we decide to go ahead with it, the first, number one on it says: "Only PCB liquids originating from sources in Saskatchewan shall be treated at this facility." PCB liquids mean any mineral oil or fluids that heat transfers fluids containing PCBs.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware, or does he deny, that the treatment plant is being constructed over the Regina aquifer which supplies about one-third of Regina's drinking water, and is he able to assure us that a PCB treatment plant located over an aquifer represents no danger to Regina's water or its citizens?

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Well first of all, Mr. Speaker, you must realize that this is 0.05 of 1 per cent contamination of PCBs. This oil, that's all it contains. Second of all, if a spill did occur outside . . . Inside it's completely controlled, completely cement floors. The tanks located in there would be one tank inside of another retaining tank which will hold 100 per cent, 110 per cent of the containing fluid. So it will be a double, or I guess a triple security, in fact, on storage.

The only area that something could happen is in transportation, as you're well aware. If it did, then it would be a surface type of an accident and would have to be cleaned up accordingly. It's transported all the time, and it's a very low contamination of PCBs, 0.05 of 1 per cent.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister will be aware that PCBs are a highly sensitive matter in the minds of the public, not . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

You are aware of that because of recent incidents in north-west Ontario and in Saskatoon. Your department . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please! Order, order, please! The members are making so much noise that it's impossible for a minister to hear the question. I would ask that you give some consideration to the operation of the House.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I say to you that PCBs are a matter of sensitivity in the minds of the public. You have given a permit conditional upon a

number of things. One of them was the creation of an adequate contingency plan in case there was a serious spill. Since you have approved the project, I assume the plan is in place.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, to table the contingency plan, make it available to the House and to the citizens of north-east Regina. And would you table all other documents which you used in considering whether or not the permit should be issued. Would you make them available to the House as soon as possible, and through the House, to the citizens who will have to live with that plan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Well first of all, Mr. Speaker, it hasn't approved. The only approval given by the Department of Environment has been the process that's in place today. That is the one where they, on site, decontaminate the PCBs from the oil that Sask Power has. That's the only approval given by the Department of Environment.

Should approval be given — and I can read off all the list of approvals that they'd have, all the things they'd have to meet — the one would be that it'd have to be from Saskatchewan only.

The concentration of PCBs in the liquids, which are treated at the facilities shall not exceed 500 parts per million. The minister may, upon request, amend any conditions of 1 and 2 if the company can successfully demonstrate to the department through controlled exportation in Saskatchewan that the company process is capable of treating higher concentrations. Treated fluid shall be sampled after it leaves the PCB decontamination unit, and shall not be clarified or upgraded and placed into storage or released from the facility until the concentration of PCBs has been determined to be less than below the defective limits. Analytical data shall be available to substantiate completed destruction of PCBs.

I could go on and on. They're all here. And I'd be prepared to send you over a copy of what's proposed, even before we allow the processing of that plant to go ahead.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister give us two undertakings: one, that he will supply the House with the material he used to give the permission as it extends to date; and will he give an undertaking that before he permits processing of PCBs of a higher concentration than now contemplated, he will make available to the House, and to the public, the documents upon which he gives the extended permission?

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Well certainly, Mr. Speaker, before permission to go beyond the 0.05, 1 per cent PCB contamination is allowed by the corporation, we will certainly make that available to the House.

As far as what is existing, it is existing under just a general permit to date that says that they can, on site, where it is already located, decontaminate the existing oil for Sask Power Corporation.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of the Environment, and it's regarding the PCB controversy that we have now. As you're aware, Mr. Minister, PCBs are not treated, as I'm aware, any place in Canada, but they are stored. When you have excess PCBs, they are stored in Alberta.

You have indicated that you are now going to treat PCBs in Regina. And we know that they are treating PCBs in Europe and Finland and Sweden at high temperatures with incinerators. And I just wonder, Mr. Minister; could you indicate if this is the process that you are taking with the PCBs that you have from Sask Power? And if that is the case, is it possible that we will become the province that will be destroying PCBs for the rest of Canada?

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — First of all, no, to the last question. It'll only be from Saskatchewan. And no to the first one. It won't be burning or destroying it through high temperature. We don't have that facility here.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Minister, you state that you have no given permission. You're obviously a student of the Bob Andrew school of public administration since you assume that a written letter means nothing. Mr. Minister, I want to read the letter from Mr. Clark to PPM Canon Inc., dated March 12 which says:

You may therefore proceed with the project, subject to your compliance with any requirements by other departments or agencies.

That strikes me, Mr. Minister, as being a fairly straightforward consent. And I ask you again, do you not think that the public of Regina were interested parties who should have had an opportunity to put input into this very controversial plant?

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I might as well just read off the rest of the requirements going to be needed before . . . And I want to emphasize . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. Give the minister the opportunity to answer.

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Okay. I had read the first four points off. I'll read the next.

Point five, PCB-contaminated liquid shall be treated as soon as practical and shall not at any time remain in storage at the site for more than 10 days. No more than 5,000 imperial gallons of liquid shall be on site.

Storage tanks and process equipment and any other containing PCB liquids or any other . . . where PCBs may be stored, shall be provided with and containments works approved by the department to ensure that spills which may occur inside will be kept totally isolated from the environment.

All PCB liquids brought to the facility shall be immediately placed in a containment area or transferred to the PCB storage tank.

Do you want me to read the rest of it off? I mean there's about five . . .

I think this is one part of your question here:

Waste generated during the destruction of . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. You know it's very difficult for a minister to answer a question when you continue to speak, and I would ask for order while he answers.

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — In regards to the storage of the waste:

Waste generated during the destruction of PCB liquid shall be considered hazardous and shall be disposed of in a manner acceptable to the Department of the Environment.

All waste generated by the process and any other hazardous waste produced at the facility shall be disposed as soon as practical.

At no time shall the materials be kept in storage beyond 30 days.

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question, Mr. Minister. Is the minister aware of a report entitled

“Destruction Technologies for PCBs,” prepared for the federal government in 1983? It shows that PPM Inc. of Overland Park, Kansas, has only one processing unit in operation in 1982, and that its process was still under consideration for application in Canada.

So, Mr. Minister, this is a very new technology. It doesn't have a long track record. In fact, Regina is about to be used as an experimental farm in the treatment of these hazardous wastes.

I ask you, Mr. Minister: isn't that the real reason why you didn't make the facts of this public — because you were afraid the public of Regina would react adversely to being used as an experimental farm for a very dangerous chemical?

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — First of all, Mr. Speaker, in answer to the member's question. It isn't a destruction of PCBs. It's a leaching effect to the PCBs which are contained and stored and will be sent, I understand, down to the United States is where the only place that accept them. But they will be stored on site until such time as they can be safely transported to a safe location or to be destroyed.

I don't know what else I could answer the member except that I could read the rest of this whole regulations off, but there's a whole series of them, and I'd be prepared to send them to him if he'd like to read them and review them.

### **Studies re transportation of Hazardous Goods**

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question, Mr. Minister. Another concern that many people in the city of Regina will have is the transportation of these hazardous materials. They're going to be transferred, presumably by truck, through the streets of the city of Regina. What studies, Mr. Minister, have been done with respect to the safety of transporting these hazardous materials through the streets before your department gave approval of this project on March 12, as it so clearly did.

**Hon. Mr. Hardy:** — Well just before I let the Minister of transportation answer it. Highways and Transportation answer it, I'd just like to say that for the last I don't know how many years — 20, 30 years — it's been transported in the city on a continuous basis because of the very low contamination content. But in regards to the new Highways and Transportation Act in regards to hazardous goods, I'll let the Minister of Highways answer it.

**Hon. Mr. Garner:** — Mr. Speaker, this is — and I would like to thank the members opposite for raising this valid question — as of last Friday the federal minister did pass a protective direction affecting the transportation of dangerous goods in Canada. It is part of the regulations that will be adopted by the federal government, and by the Government of Saskatchewan when we have the passage of our transportation of dangerous goods legislation in this Assembly, and it does read:

Mr. Don Mazankowski, Minister of Transportation, pursuant to section 28 of the Transportation of Dangerous goods Act, directed that any person engaged in offering for transport, or transporting, as the case may be, of PCBs shall not offer for transport by road or railway vehicle, or shall not transport PCBs unless the PCB or any article containing the PCB is enclosed in a rigid, leak-proof container; and any large article containing PCBs that cannot be so enclosed shall be drained and shall be provided with a weather-protected, leak-proof device to prevent the release of any PCB from the large article.

It is very lengthy, Mr. Speaker. I'd be prepared also to share this with the members opposite as a new directive come down by the federal Minister of Transportation on the transportation of any PCBs in Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### **Letter Sent to Government Employees**

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Premier, and it deals with the thousands of letters he sent last fall, at taxpayer's expense, to government employees. These letters were a clear attempt by the Premier to beg for the support of public servants at taxpayers' expense.

On December the 10<sup>th</sup>, you agreed to tell this Assembly, and Saskatchewan taxpayers, how many letters were sent, the cost of these letters, and why the Conservative Party (as opposed to Saskatchewan taxpayers) shouldn't be paying for these political letters. Since he has had many weeks to prepare that information, can the Premier now give that information to the Assembly today?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't have the information with me, but I'll get it as quickly as possible.

### **Advertising Costs**

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier as well. It has to do with the bombardment of advertising that is presently being done, trying to revive the government after their budget they announced two weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, after the most intelligent budget was released in this House announcing record tax increases for the people, they now have an individual by the name of Spence Bozak, a former PC party candidate, reading the 60-second clips, trying to convince the people of the province that massive tax increases are a good idea.

I would like to ask the Premier how much these ads are costing the taxpayers who are being convinced that these tax increases are a good idea?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to take notice of the question with respect to information, or funds allocated to promotion of the budget, and I'll respond to the hon. member when I get the information.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. I wonder if you can explain to the Assembly, and the taxpayers of this province, why you are taking on now a major campaign that is attempting to sell to the taxpayers of this province why it's a good idea to pay increased taxes on their income, pay increased taxes on used automobiles, and to give up the property improvement grant. Can you tell us why taxpayers are now being asked to pay for those ads to try to get you out of trouble?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I will be only too glad to tell my hon. friend the truth about tax increases in the province of Saskatchewan, the truth about tax changes. I'll tell you the truth.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, that we have cut more taxes in the province of Saskatchewan in the last three years than any other administration in Canada. The second point . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — In fact, Mr. Speaker, it's between 400 and \$500 million that has been cut in taxes in the province of Saskatchewan since 1982.



Second, Mr. Speaker, if you want to know the comparison, all you have to do, Mr. Speaker, is look at the tax increases from 1971 to 1981 in the province of Saskatchewan. The tax rate, Mr. Speaker, went from 34 per cent to 58 per cent from 1971 to 1977. Then, Mr. Speaker, it dropped.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a final supplement to the Premier, and it has to do with his little speech he just gave about massive tax cuts, and I would agree the oil companies, the major oil companies had major tax cuts. I would say that . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. The member is making a speech, and our time has elapsed.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### **Bill No. 53 — An Act respecting Freedom of Informed Choice concerning Abortions in Saskatchewan**

**Mrs. Caswell:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that an Act, Freedom of Informed Choice concerning Abortions in Saskatchewan be now introduced and read for the first time.

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

## CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION AND RETURN

**Mr. Speaker:** — Before orders of the day, I wish to inform the Assembly that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has received from the Chief Electoral Officer a certificate of the following election and return: that is, of Richard J. Swenson, Esq., as member for the constituency of Thunder Creek.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### MOTION UNDER RULE 16

#### **Progress Made in the Business and Agricultural Sectors**

**Mr. Swenson:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker. Before I get into my talk, I would just like to run through the motion again to remind the members of its content:

That this Assembly congratulates the government for progress made in promoting investment, ensuring economic viability and job creation in the business and agricultural sectors — accomplishments that will contribute to the long-term stability and strength of Saskatchewan and in particular acknowledges progress made in the fields of energy, economic development and trade, agriculture, tourism and small business.

In rising to speak on the motion before the House today, I wish to specifically address the achievements of Saskatchewan's Progressive Conservative government with respect to agriculture. I certainly do believe that this House should congratulate the Government of Saskatchewan in the progress it has made in support of the family farm.

Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for Thunder Creek, I am proud to speak in support of a government that does so much for farmers. I am proud of our government's commitment to agriculture. The backbone of our province is our agricultural base. We recognize that Saskatchewan has made,

and will continue to make, a very significant contribution to our economy.

As many members of this legislature, I am from a rural ridings, so naturally I'm cognizant of what this government has done for farmers.

Premier Devine and his government have developed a special relationship with rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Of course there are some good reasons why this Progressive Conservative government has such a close relationship with rural Saskatchewan. The reasons are very clear. We believe agriculture is one of the corner-stones on which Saskatchewan is built.

Some 200,000 residents of this province are members of farm families. They get their living directly from the land. That many again in rural communities get their living directly from the farm communities around them. So as anyone can see, half of our population in this province is directly affected by the health of Saskatchewan agriculture. So our government is determined to see that our farming community continues to grow.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier of this province is an active farmer, and he is very proud of that fact. I look around this legislature, and I see many other members who are equally proud to be farmers. Our government is not simply made up of politicians who recognize that agriculture is important. No, it is made up of farmers who know and work the land.

As a result, since 1982 we have brought about many programs for agriculture in this province. Allow me to take a few moments to review some of the positive achievements we have made in the farming community and, after that, I will refresh the memory of this legislature about the attitude of the opposition to farming. And then I shall speak on some future programs.

When this government came into office in 1982, this province had been subjected to state farming. It was called the land bank. And we abolished it. Mr. Speaker, our grandparents and pioneers did not come here because land was for rent. They came here to work and own land. As a result, we introduced the family Farm Purchase Program.

For the record, Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the success of that program. Over 1.2 million acres of farm land have been purchased by farmers. There were 3,800 young and starting-out farmers have enrolled in the Farm Purchase Program.

What has been the NDP response to all of this? Well, believe it or not, they want to bring back the land bank. And, to boot, they want to restrict our farm size. That's their whole attitude towards the family farm in a nutshell.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government recognizes the fact that our province's economy is based on the agricultural sector. The Progressive Conservative government's approach to agriculture is founded in three components from which all our programs flow.

1. The establishment of a security net to ensure that viable Saskatchewan farms are not economically jeopardized.
2. The creation of innovative development thrust to ensure that the economic potential of the agricultural sector is maximized, and that the farming community is equipped to successfully meet the economic, technological, and marketing challenges brought about in a changing world.
3. Private ownership of land, and producer control, where possible, of making structures.

I'd like to take a few moments, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the safety net. We recognize that farmers have no control over commodity prices. As a province, we have little input in national or international marketing structures. As a result, we have designed programs to reduce input cost to the producer. We want to provide a degree of security at the family farm level.

For that reason, we have established the Rural Natural Gas Distribution Program. We brought natural gas to farms and rural communities for the benefit of the people living there.

Let's take a look at the hook-up costs, Mr. Speaker. That hook-up cost to farmers is \$2,600. And yet the actual cost to Sask Power is 10,400. That's a substantial saving for the members of our agricultural community, Mr. Speaker. Farm heating costs alone have been reduced by up to 50 per cent by this very significant measure which we have instituted.

Take the counselling and assistance program. This provides financial counselling by a farmer panel. It can recommend a government guarantee for loans. The Farm Land Security Act prevents foreclosures on farm land for one year. We eliminated the sales tax on farm-used electricity to help reduce operating costs. And when drought hit our province last summer, Mr. Speaker, this government took action. We set up a drought assistance program which many cattlemen in this province benefited from, Mr. Speaker, that is what I call commitment to the family farm.

At the same time, the Minister of Agriculture, the member from Weyburn, has established innovative policy to ensure the fullest potential of agriculture in this province. The Agricultural Credit Corporation provides loans up to 350,000 at interest rates as low as 8 per cent.

The eligibility requirements of former programs prevented many farmers from participating. We changed all that when we took power in 1982. When the Minister of Agriculture introduced the Livestock Investment Tax Credit, he brought about a very unique tax break, which at the same time helped the cattle industry in this province.

Most importantly, in all the Progressive Conservative policy for agriculture is the belief that farm land should be privately owned. As I stated earlier, Mr. Speaker, the abolishing of the land bank and the establishment of the family Farm Purchase Program was made so that private ownership of farm land is a reality. We did not want the return of the NDP land bank. We do not want to nationalize farms like the NDP did.

(1445)

And the NDP would distort the truth and play on the fears of farmers rather than telling the truth about the situation. I can think of a recent advertising campaign where they attacked the Progressive Conservative farm security land Bill. And the NDP said, and I quote, "It doesn't contain one thin dime for Saskatchewan's family farmers." Well how completely false can a statement be? That's just in keeping with the negative attitude that seems to come out of the members over there.

The difficulty facing many farmers today started with those very high interest rates which this country had in 1980, 1981, and 1982. And who was in office during those years, Mr. Speaker? It was the NDP. They did nothing to help farmers cope with those high interest rates.

When the Progressive Conservative government came into office, we began providing 8 per cent money for farmers to buy land. And that program, as I have pointed out, is very successful. People all across this province have lined up to take part in that program. And you just can't take thousands of people, Mr. Speaker, and when they've applied for something like this, and say that a program is not successful.

Since then the government of Premier Devine has built a solid base for our important agricultural industry.

At the direction of this government millions of dollars have been put into the livestock industry. Farmers are being helped to drill wells to provide water. We pay farmers compensation for flood in the north-east. This past year alone those programs added up to \$160 million for farmers.

Now we have a federal government in Ottawa that understands farmers. Gone are the days of the arrogant prime minister telling western Canadians to sell their own wheat. The Mulroney government in Ottawa has taken off the tax on diesel fuel, for instance, to help out the western Canadian farmer.

Premier Devine is respected in Ottawa. He has persuaded Ottawa to pay more attention to the needs of our farmers in Saskatchewan. If the NDP opposition were genuine they would have supported The Farm Land Security Act whole-heartedly. They would have admitted that this legislation gives farmers some breathing room, an opportunity to restructure their debts.

Did the NDP do that? No, they didn't. They played on farmers fears instead. The NDP opposition obviously, Mr. Speaker, can only deal in rhetoric. I seriously question if they do indeed have any practical, common sense ideas that will help Saskatchewan farmers. I just doubt very much that they do.

The Progressive Conservative government, on the hand, is fortunate to have such a capable Minister of Agriculture as the hon. member from Weyburn, Saskatchewan's Minister of Agriculture has gained a reputation as a straight shooter who puts the needs of farmers before that of politics. No matter where you go in the farming communities you will always hear reports about how great it is that we have a farmer as a friend in Regina and as Minister of Agriculture in this province. He listens. He cares. He's a man of vision. He knows our magnificent future growth is rooted in this province's fertile soil.

In facing the future with confidence, our Progressive Conservative government has given renewed emphasis to its concern for agriculture. The budget introduced by finance minister, the hon. member from Kindersley, is clear proof of that, Mr. Speaker, agriculture has been designated as one of the four sectors critical to Saskatchewan's future. There can be no lasting prosperity in this province without a strong farm economy. Agriculture today is \$4 billion industry in this province, and I suppose you could say that farming is the heart and soul of Saskatchewan.

In 1985, the first priority of this Progressive Conservative government is to see that any farmer in a potentially viable position who wants to put in a crop is able to do so this spring. With that in mind, there will be three initiatives to provide that kinds of assistance.

First, a major expansion of the counselling and assistance program for farmers, and this will provide an additional 1,500 farmers with loan guarantees on 120 million in loans. Guarantees will be provided on loans up to \$200,000.

Second, Agriculture Credit Corporation clients who obtained loans between April 1980 and December of 1983 will have their loan rate reduced from 14 per cent to 12 per cent. As a result, Mr. Speaker, 1,000 farmers will receive a total of almost \$4 million in interest relief.

Third, the Farm Purchase Program will be extended for an additional year. That is very good news, Mr. Speaker. The Farm Purchase Program is the most unique agricultural program that helped young and starting farmers, and I would dare say there is no program like it anywhere else in North America.

The interest rate subsidies will provide an additional 200 million in loans to 1,800 farmers and this will extend total program coverage to 5,800 framers and \$640 million in loans.

As I stated earlier, Mr. Speaker, these programs are designed to respond to the immediate financing needs of farmers. They will help ensure that the industry as a whole remains viable.

There's much more that I could say, Mr. Speaker, but at this time, I would like to move a motion again, and this will be seconded by the member from Kelvington-Wadena:

That this Assembly congratulate the government for the progress made in promoting investment, ensuring economic viability and job creation in the business and the agricultural sectors, accomplishments that will contribute to the long-term stability and strength of Saskatchewan, and in particular acknowledges progress made in the fields of energy, economic development and trade, agriculture, and tourism and small business.

**Mr. Petersen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you will pardon me, I'm a little bit under the weather today. I have a bit of a sore throat, so if I'm not my usual vociferous self I'm sure the opposition will appreciate it for a change.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Thunder Creek has gone into the programs that we've developed as a government over the years we've been in office. He went briefly into the history that led to our government coming into power. And I think he reminded the opposition and the people of Saskatchewan that the opposition constantly looks to the past, while the government looks to the future.

And on that note, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk about the future, and what the budget means to the future of Saskatchewan. The Government of Saskatchewan has implemented programs that are far-reaching and long-term.

But we didn't just sit there and say, well, we've done this program and that program. The Farm Purchase Program was a good one. Our Ag Credit Corporation programs moved into the right areas. We dealt with problems as they arose, day-to-day problems. We didn't just hang our hat on one big issue and say, well, now we've solved all your problems, folks. We continued to do our research, and we continued to move forward.

In the area of crop insurance, Mr. Speaker, which is an area that definitely ensures the viability of agriculture in this province, we've moved in new directions. We've moved to ensure unlicensed semi-dwarf wheats, which just last week received the acceptance of the wheat board to be marketed in Canada. That was done in conjunction with consultation between our province and the federal people.

We've moved in the area of insurance for the honey producers. Under the former administration, a honey producer was something that sort of existed out there but really didn't have any economic significance. They couldn't quite figure out what they were. They really didn't classify them as agriculture. The bees did all the work, too, come to think of it.

But it still is an area of agriculture, Mr. Speaker, that has risk involved in it. And that risk exemplified itself last year with the drought. We had a number of honey producers who were severely hurt by the drought. We reacted. We came out with a program for those honey producers.

But there are small items. Maybe they don't capture the imaginations of the people of Canada. They certainly don't capture the imaginations of the opposition. I can tell from the looks on their faces. Or maybe it's just they don't care . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Nothing to capture.

**Mr. Petersen:** — Nothing to capture, one member said. Maybe he's right.

Insurance, Mr. Speaker, is an excellent form of making certain that our farmers will be around tomorrow. We have the best farmers in North America, bar none. The most advanced technologically. They are the most up to date. And one only has to look at the canola growers or the barley growers to see that they are on the cutting edge of the technology of agriculture.

But I don't care how good a farmer you are. I don't care how much reading you do. I don't care how much technology you use. When nature turns against you, you're beat. I'm only human. I can't fight God's will. But, Mr. Speaker, I can perhaps do something to minimize the effects of it. And we get back to crop insurance.

The NDP, in one of their resolutions, however, 1983, say that, "Be it further resolved that the NDP support a limit on coverage under the Saskatchewan crop insurance program." Well, Mr. Speaker, I can't see how that enhances agriculture. And, as a matter of fact, I find it a detriment.

This year we had a severe drought in the South, floods in the north-east, and we had a record number of crop insurance claims. The previous record year, I believe, was 1980.

And when I compared our statistics previously in this Assembly to the performance of the Saskatchewan crop insurance program at that time and the performance of it today under the leadership of the member for Arm River, I find that on January 6th we had processed double the money that they had done under their administration on the same date three or four years before. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, they were a month and a week ahead.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they can minimize the effects of crop insurance. They can talk about limiting it and talk about supporting a program that would keep a certain group of individuals from enjoying the benefits of it, even though they'd be willing to pay the premiums. But let me ask you: where would Saskatchewan be today if, for example, in the south-east, \$55,471,734 hadn't been paid out? That's an average of \$9,548 per client. In the south-west, \$90,480,104. That works out to an average of \$11,913 pre contract.

We can keep going and going down the list. And I'd love to read it into the record because it's impressive. But the total, Mr. Speaker, is \$258,000,918. Mr. Speaker, if that does not help to ensure the viability of agriculture in Saskatchewan during tough times. I don't know what does. Unless of course, Mr. Speaker, it might be the Western Grains Stabilization Fund which the federal government has now moved on.

And may I say, Mr. Speaker, the previous federal government sat on that program and tucked it under its little collective wings and said, well, we're going to hold that off. We're going to keep that back as an election promise. Never mind we've got farmers that are hurting. Never mind that we've got farmers that are suffering a cost-price squeeze. We're just going to hold that back.

Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House called on the federal minister at that time to act on the Western Grains Stabilization Fund and make certain that it was triggered; make certain that that money got out to farmers. But he said, no. It wasn't more than two months after the federal Conservatives got into power, Mr. Speaker, that positive change occurred. Interim payments were on their way.

In February, legislation was enacted that allowed that program to be triggered. And just last week, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Saskatchewan who are enrolled in that program received cheques of up to \$8,000, Mr. Speaker, to help them out when times were tough. And they are tough in places here, Mr. Speaker.

And that's not to say that that was a hand-out from the federal government. That was producer money that they had paid in as an insurance premium. Our farmers, Mr. Speaker, don't live hand to mouth, day to day, program to program. They plan ahead. They try to ensure their viability (sticking to the motion) by minimizing the risks, and that to me, Mr. Speaker, makes sense. And I find any organization such as the opposition that would try to limit that tool totally ludicrous. I cannot comprehend why they would put forward such a resolution, but they did. No two ways about it.

Getting back, Mr. Speaker, to how farmers in Saskatchewan have moved onward and upward in the last three years, the member for Thunder Creek talked about the Farm Purchase Program. Well, Mr. Speaker, unlike the previous administration who saw 10,000 family farms go down the tubes between 1971 and 1981, we're committed to trying to keep those people there. Ten thousand went down the tubes and they let them go. They didn't do anything to try to help them out. They didn't try and programs except their beloved land bank.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when those farmers went down, the small business sector in Saskatchewan was hurt. Small business, Mr. Speaker, abound across the province of Saskatchewan in small towns and cities everywhere. And, Mr. Speaker, it's a symbiotic relationship. Farmers need the small-business man to supply them with their supplies, their repairs, their fuel, their fertilizer; and in turn, that creates jobs, and jobs is what the opposition has been crying about that we needed in this province. And if they'd only take their blinkers off for a moment and look at the programs that this government has introduced, they would have to admit that we have created jobs here by the thousands. But they insist on sticking to their dogma, Mr. Speaker, their written lines that I'm sure their leader, or whoever's trying to be leader this week, has written for them. I'm sure they stick strictly to those lines because they are not allowed to be free-thinking people.

(1500)

**Mr. Speaker:** — It's my duty to inform the member that his time has elapsed.

**Mr. Lusney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I get into this debate, Mr. Speaker, in Rule 16 today, and I must say that listening to the member for Thunder Creek, I have a few questions that I find very difficult to understand as to just what he was getting at.

And the member talks about the viability of the family farm, ensuring economics, or the economic viability of those family farms. And he criticizes land bank as being one of the things that never should have happened; that's the worst thing that ever happened in this province. Well, Mr. Speaker, land bank had some problems, but there were a lot of young farmers that got started at land bank that never would have had the opportunity to get into farming.

And the member from Thunder Creek should look at where possibly even his family got started years ago, and many other ranchers like him that today say that they are very prosperous, and they did it because of their efforts and their hard work. Well, Mr. Speaker, very many of those ranchers in the south-west today still have very cheap leases. They had leases that cost them virtually nothing for years and years and years. That's how they prospered, Mr. Speaker. That's how those ranchers prospered. But they say that the grain producers should not have an opportunity to get into agriculture, to get into farming, and prosper at all. He shouldn't prosper on the backs of the taxpayers. But it was fine for the ranchers.

Now I say to the members opposite: that is total hypocrisy. I think if we are saying that we are going to help agriculture, we should be looking at helping agriculture, and helping everyone that wants to get into agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about all the good things that they have done for agriculture, and that they have done for other areas, that they have done in creating jobs.

And we have to look at one other area. When you talk about jobs, look at what is happening within the Department of Highways. There's where many jobs could have been created. But what happened in that department? We see a minister of highways that decided to sell the equipment that the department had, to lay off hundreds of people, and then reduce the amount of money that he is going to spend on constructing roads in this province. And then they have the gall to come to this House and say to the public of Saskatchewan that they are interested in creating jobs, that they are going to put more money into this province, and they are going to have more people working, more than have ever worked in the past.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the number of people that are unemployed, I think the government has failed, and it has failed in its efforts to create jobs, or to help agriculture, or to do many of the things that they say they were successful in.

Mr. Speaker, what is this government doing for rural Saskatchewan or the viability of farmers or the viability of small-business people? They have done very little for either one, because we see many people, many small-business people going bankrupt today — going bankrupt. Why? Because many of them, as the member for Kelvington suggested, do depend on agriculture. They are going bankrupt because agriculture is not as strong as it used to be.

Agriculture is going through some very rough times and what they need is some help from the government, not only to save agriculture, but to also assist small business at the same time. And if we can only get agriculture going, some of these small businesses might be able to survive. But if we ignore both, we are going to see fewer and fewer farmers every year, and we are going to see fewer and fewer small-business people in our communities. And that is not only going to hurt the small communities, I think it's going to hurt the province as a whole because the small-business people create jobs. That helps the province; that saves us a lot of money. It saves us money in paying out benefits to people that can't find a job.

Agriculture is the key in this province, and we have seen very little other than this government saying that they are going to provide money, 8 per cent money for farmers to buy their own land to own their own land. This is fine, Mr. Speaker. There is certainly nothing wrong with that. But how many of those young farmers that really want to get into agriculture, that want to farm, have really had the opportunity to do that? How many of those young farmers could qualify on the farm credit criteria to be able to buy that land that they would like to own or that they would like to farm? There is very few of those, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest, that have been able to take advantage of that program.

Every program that this government comes forward with says a program that assists the ones that have a fair amount, to gain a little more, and it gives very little in either program to give the opportunity for a beginning farmer, a beginning business man, or anyone else in this province, to get a start and to get going. They do very little in that department, Mr. Speaker.

They talk about the land security that they have. Well, I suggested the other day that they are not doing what that Bill should be doing. The farm land security Bill should be protecting, if they are serious about it, everyone in this province, whether it's land that he had bought through the banks, that the bank can't foreclose on, or whether it is land that he has through leases with the government. Both of those should be under the same kind of regulation and guide-lines.

But the government has exempted themselves of that responsibility. They don't have to abide by those rules or regulations. They just continue to take the land that the lease-holders have, because they couldn't pay the rent. And why couldn't they pay it? In most cases, when they can't pay it, it's because they happen to live in the northern part of the province. They live in an area that for the last two or three years has had difficult crops, where they have been flooded out, where they have had the midge. They had different things that created problems for them, and they didn't get very good crops. So they had some difficulty in paying their lease fees.

And, Mr. Speaker, what did the Minister of Agriculture do? He didn't say to his department that you cannot take any of that land away for at least a year, because that is our policy, and we will give these people an opportunity to try and get a crop out of there, and try and restructure that debt. Because those that are in that situation today cannot take advantage of any of the programs that this government has put forward. They cannot take advantage of any of them. So those farmers are left at the mercy of this government, and many of them, it appears, are going to have to leave that land and move off, because once the government starts to take their leased land away, if they did own a quarter or so, then the bank is ready to move in and foreclose on the rest.



And there are some, as I mentioned yesterday, one that has nothing but leased land. He was hoping to get established in farming, and he has been doing it for a few years now. The government decided that because he had some bad years that they were going to take some of that land away. And he's going to get left with a smaller unit, a non-viable unit, and still expected to pay the back leases that are facing him.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if this government was serious about keeping all of our young farmers on the land, then they would look at trying to help some of those, try to help them restructure the debt that they do have, and give them an opportunity to get better crops and to continue in agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things, I think, that this government failed to address when it comes to agriculture, is cost of inputs. The minister has introduced, or said that he was going to be looking at farm input costs. They were going to have a study made that are going to tell people that there are some bargains. All you have to do is go and look for them; that some company has a little bit of discount and this is where you might be able to contact that company that gives you a discount. And this is somehow supposed to help reduce the costs of inputs to the farmer. Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how that's going to help very much because I think many of the farmers today shop around all they could to find out . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. It's my duty to inform the member his time has elapsed.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to enter this debate which congratulates the government on its performance.

It was moved by the member for Thunder Creek, and I want to take the opportunity to welcome the member for Thunder Creek to the House, congratulate him on his election and congratulate him on the delivery of the speech which he gave. I won't congratulate him on the content; I'm not sure that he's responsible for the content in any case. I do say that he acquitted himself well as a new member of the House.

I want now to turn to the motion and turn, particularly, to those portions which deal with small business. The motion talks about the job creation in the business sector and then talks about the accomplishments of the government in small business.

I know the government is right when it concentrates attention on small business. It is wrong when it congratulates itself on what it has been able to achieve. Certainly the success of small business is crucial to the success of the Saskatchewan economy. We need a strong and diverse small-business sector.

You can't accomplish long-term prosperity in this province by depending only on government — we'll concede that. And I wish the government members would concede that you can't get long-term prosperity in this province by relying only on big business, which has been their policy for three years. We need, not blind faith in big business, not blind faith in out-of-province business which is invited to come in here and somehow give Saskatchewan a chance. We need some faith in Saskatchewan people operating through their small business, through their co-ops and, yes, through their governments.

That's our strength; that's what's given us success in the past; and that's what we should be building on in the future. If we are to encourage residents of this province and people from outside this province to invest in this province, then we have got to be able to show that we, in Saskatchewan, have confidence in ourselves and are not waiting, cap in hand, until some large company comes from outside the province and somehow gives us a chance.

When it comes to attracting out-of-province business (and we have no objection to

out-of-province business) it's going to take more than around-the-world junkets and cocktail parties to get business people to come here.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — What we have to show them is that they can come here and make a profit. We have to show them a pro forma operating statement which shows a profit, and that, we have not been able to do . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No indeed. We haven't been able to show them that, and they haven't been coming. They haven't been coming.

People on the opposite side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, suggest that somehow prior to their assuming office there was nobody coming into this province to invest, and now they're coming in. It is too bad the figures don't support that proposition.

(1515)

In 1979 and 1980 and 1981, in those three years — the last three years of the previous government — investment in our province increased by an average of 19 per cent. Those are the hard figures. And in their three years which followed it, investment increased by less than a half of 1 per cent, and those are hard figures. Hard figures. People have not been coming in. They have not been attracted by a government which has no confidence in itself, and no confidence in the people of Saskatchewan, but is simply sending out pleas for people to come in from outside the province to somehow bail us out. Not good enough.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I'm talking is not doom and gloom. I'm talking reality. And we don't need to succumb to pessimism. What we need is a little confidence in ourselves. We have a problem. There is not enough investment, and there's not enough jobs. But that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is an opportunity as well.

Unemployment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the main obstacle to business prosperity in this province. When people are unemployed, or when they fear that they may become unemployed, they don't spend money, and they won't make purchases on a long-term basis. And Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's just what's happening. They are not spending on that car, they are not building that extra house, they are not even spending money in restaurants. They are saving for a rainy day, and savings are going up and up, where retail sales are flat.

That shows a people not without money, but without confidence, and that's what we have in Saskatchewan now — a people who have savings, a people who have money, but a people who do not have confidence in their future. That kind of unease and uncertainty about employment is eating into the very fibre of our small business.

Far too many people are uncertain about their employment prospects. Far too many people, in fact, are unemployed. In 1981 we had 21,000 unemployed in November of '81. In November of '84 it was 40,000, just about double, and it's up now to 46,000 — 46,000 people, and many more tens of thousands of people fearing that they will be next, can you understand why people aren't taking long-term risks, why they're not investing, why they're not spending?

Do you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how much money we're talking about? Forty-six thousand people represents a payroll and wealth creation of about \$900 million a year. If we could get all of those people working we'd have \$900 million a year more running through the tills of small business. We don't have that. We don't have that.

Just to put it in perspective, we heard about the drought last summer; it was a very serious drought. It probably cost us as much as \$750 million, perhaps even \$900 million. What I'm saying to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is while this unemployment sits at more than 45,000, we have the

equivalent of a massive drought each and every year. And can you then wonder why we are not prospering in this province?

Can you wonder — can you wonder why, while across Canada retail sales went up 8 per cent, in Saskatchewan they went up less than one-half of 1 per cent? Can you wonder why we were number 10 in growth in retail sales? Can you wonder, therefore, why small-business people are not exactly excited about this boom, about this so-called boom?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are people who are saying that the figures are warped. I wish they were. These are the figures put out by Stats Canada and they are hard reality. One doesn't have to listen to me. Talk to a small-business man and ask him how much his sales went up last year.

Or talk about housing starts; I hope they don't deny that housing starts in 1984 were the lowest in 12 years — the lowest back certainly into the early 1970s. And I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether or not that doesn't mean that small-business people are losing opportunities?

Every small-business man will tell you that he just gets a good deal of trade out of new houses because people are always buying new fencing material and new lawn seed and lawn mowers and all the rest of it. But when housing starts are way, way down to the lowest that we've seen in 12 years, is there any wonder why retail sales have seen, in Saskatchewan, the lowest growth in any province in Canada? And the results are all around us — 306 Saskatchewan-based, small businesses declared bankruptcy last year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is very, very clear that the results of these blows to small business are being felt by more and more business people, and, as a result, families are not secure. As a result, this insecurity is feeding on itself.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that this is an opportunity. If we . . . There are about 35,000 small businesses in Saskatchewan. If we could get them to hire even one person . . .

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** — Order, I must . . . The member's time has elapsed. The member from Morse.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Martens:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was going to take some time to discuss some of the things that relates to the development of irrigation in this province, and I was going to deal mainly with that, but I'm going to respond to some of the statements that were made by the member from Pelly.

He indicated to us here in this House, just a few minutes ago, that the leases paid in the southern part of Saskatchewan were the reasons why they had such vast land resources there, and that the lease land was the reason why they had made so much money, and the lease land was the reason why they were a wealthy people down there. I'll have you know that there's more lease land north of the No. 1 Highway than there is south, and that is . . .

And I'll tell you another reason why some of those lands, the holdings are so big — and the member from Assiniboia will know, and the member from Shaunavon will know — that those people were told that they had to take it on as a part of the payment for taxes in 1930 when they were put on there. And that's some of the reasons why they have large land holdings. Those were the things that you misinterpreted when you made your statements earlier.

In dealing with another issue, the member, the Leader of the Opposition made some comments about no confidence. Well I'll tell you something about no confidence. The oil industry in the south-west doesn't have any confidence in that part of the people of Saskatchewan ever getting elected again, because the service industry in this province was downhill, going downhill. And

who put the opportunity in for this country, this province, to have 250 new companies come into this province? That's development, and the member from Shaunavon is one of them.

Now, there's another 90 companies from the oil fields services that are already established in this province, brand-new ones that came in here because of our oil policy, employing another 2,500 people. That's something you guys don't know anything about.

**An Hon. Member:** — Record high unemployment.

**Mr. Martens:** — All of Canada has a record high unemployment. You want to take economic depression out through all the world. That's part of the problem, and it was your friends over in Ottawa that did it, not the guys that were friends of ours. You slept with them, not us.

Dealing with irrigation as it relates to this motion that we have here, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with some figures that were given to me regarding irrigation development in this province. I want to point out some things there, too, that the NDP never did anything about. They just stood around and asked questions. I was a developer in those NDP years, and I know what it's all about. They didn't have any method of getting the water rights for the irrigation development. They had 11 different departments that they put that all together with. You had to go to every one of them to try and get some water rights. They just were totally inept in dealing with the water problems, whether it's the north-east or whether it's the south-west.

Since we took office there have been 740 applications for water development in this province. The average acre size isn't a big 250 or 400, it's 80 acres. Of that, 58,000 acres are under development since we took office. That's where the realism is.

Now let's deal with some comparisons. We put 72 projects into place in this province since 1982, and the average size per project is 102 acres, with a pay-out of \$5,720 per application.

I want to tell you something else. When the NDP were in government in this province, all you ever had was a \$3,500 once-in-a-lifetime grant that provided development opportunity for agriculture. How did you drought-proof it? You didn't. You just let Sask Power put a great big hold on the Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and the Shaunavon seats on the water running into the Old Wives Lake. You just sealed it all off. You let them put 14,000 acre feet of water under seizure for something that the people there didn't even want to have.

Now the Sask Water corporation and the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) have done some major developments together. They're going to continue to that. We've had funding from Urban Affairs, from Environment, and from the Department of Agriculture to contribute to that, and that's an extensive part.

Here's another thing that we can put together. In 10 years or 11 years that you were in office you developed 135,000 acres of intensive irrigation, and in less intensive there was another 145, for a total of 280,000. Now how much did you develop in those — that's what we got in Saskatchewan — how much did you develop in your 11 years? Here's the answer: 35,219 acres, in 10 or 11 years of your party being in power.

**An Hon. Member:** — That's 3,000 acres a year.

**Mr. Martens:** — That's 3,000 acres a year. Then in two full years, 1982 — or three full years — '83 and 1984. we developed 33,664 acres. In three years, we did almost equivalent to what you did in 11 years.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Martens:** — That, to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the reason why the people didn't want

to have that government in this building any longer. They weren't intensive. They weren't . . . They didn't know anything about agriculture because they didn't have their feet on the ground.

Now I want to go into a little bit more detail as it relates to the number of farmers for irrigation development. How many did they have in 10 years? They had 395 — 395 in 10 years for easy figuring — that's 39.5 a year. How many did we have in three years? We had 293 — almost 100 every year that we've been here and they haven't.

Now I think that that's something significant. We knew where to put the finger on it and how to put the emphasis. They didn't. I can recall coming into this building and seeing people as it related to the water and paying out in agriculture, and I had to . . . They didn't even spend the money that they had allocated for it. As a matter of fact, it cost them a dollar for every dollar that they gave out in grants. They were just totally inept in dealing with anything that related to any kind of irrigation development.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I met with some people who used to work in Saskatchewan who are now working for the St. Mary's irrigation district in Alberta. And the gentlemen's name is Jim Brown — he's the head of the St. Mary's irrigation district. It was probably the largest in Alberta. And he had this to say to me. He said, oh, you're from Saskatchewan? I said, yes. He said, I used to be too. Well, why did you leave? Well, he said, in 1971 I found out that the NDP government wasn't going to do any more in irrigation development to speak of. So he said, I left. I went to Alberta and I was given the responsibility of looking for grants from the Alberta government, in 1971. He said, I went from St. Mary's irrigation district and I went to the capital city of Edmonton, Alberta and who should I see there? It was the same guy that had been working for the Saskatchewan government, here in Regina, that he had been dealing with grants as it related to the Outlook irrigation project.

(1530)

Now that's the kind of thing — he had to leave because he saw no opportunity. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have in this province a very definite opportunity. We're going to continue to work together with the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) in long-term development and that's a very major part of the kind of things that we want to do.

Another thing that I feel proud of that we as a government have been able to do is getting some changes to the western grain stabilization act as it relates to the federal government and working together with them. The livestock drought assistance program, where the cattle were paid on a per cow basis, I believe that was an important feature . . . The North-east Saskatchewan Flood compensation.

And the member from Kelvington-Wadena dealt quite extensively with the crop insurance, and I think that's a major feature — and changes in economic philosophy and policy of this government and the people of Saskatchewan — looking for a better insurance program for their product.

And what was a special thing for my area as it related to the minister of crop insurance, the member from Arm River, was the forage insurance program that the crop insurance is giving. And it was expanded this year to 78 municipalities, and I think that that's a real good policy.

Another thing that I think is good is the way the federal government is going to handle the fuel rebates. We had fuel rebates given in various ways. The federal government is going to ask the bulk dealers to get a number for each farmer, and that's going to be the way that they collect the rebate, and I think that, Mr. Speaker, is the way it should have been done even when the NDP tried to do it. It's a way better way of doing it, and it's a lot less headache and a lot less work.

**Mr. Engel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure I take part in debating a

resolution put forward by a government that seeks to pat itself on the back. The motion talks about a government that is satisfied with their performance. Today, as we've listen to the various speakers already, and particularly the members from our side, it seems to me there's very little that this government should be satisfied with, and there's very little reason why you people should be patting yourselves on the back.

At a time when retail sales growth in Saskatchewan . . . like our leader has already mentioned, Saskatchewan is number 10 amongst the provinces, as far as retail sales growth. In the time when 45,000 people are looking for work, and this government has the audacity to stand up in this Chamber and to pat themselves on the back and say things have never been so good, Mr. Speaker, I think it's time we debate motions like this-I think it's time we set the record straight.

I was impressed with some of the things that the member for Thunder Creek said in this resolution. The member said that half of the population in Saskatchewan is directly affected by the health of agriculture, by the health of our farmers. And I'd ask him a question back; is that why, when half of our population is trouble today, is that why 8,500 farmers in Saskatchewan, according to the Farm Credit Corporation survey, are in serious financial straight ? Is that why things are so tough ? Is that why 45,000 people are looking for work ? Is that why Saskatchewan has the lowest sales ever ?

Maybe this government should have done something about agriculture. Maybe this government should have done something about agriculture. And let me give you a little example.

The member for Morse, that just took his seat, talked about how the oil industry has confidence in this government. Well, I underline that. And I'll say they have good reason,. Mr. Speaker, to have confidence in this government. If I were in the oil business, I think I'd like this government, too.

In 1979, Mr. Speaker, in 1979 the sales of oil in Saskatchewan brought about \$1.2 billion in sales. The province took in about \$700 million in revenue. In 1984, the sales doubled, \$2.4 billion in sale and oil revenue for the oil companies — \$2.4 billion total sale. What's the revenue for the province? Still \$700 million.

Oil companies kept, in 1979, you take \$1.2 billion in sales, and you take off \$700 million in royalty and revenue to the province, and you leave the oil companies with \$500 million a year.

Well, what about 1984? You take the same \$700 million revenue away from \$2.4 billion in sales, and you leave the oil companies with \$1.7 billion — \$1.7 billion revenue every year from the oil industry instead of \$500 million.

Now no wonder they're your friends. No wonder they're your friends. My suggestion is this: take \$500 million of that revenue and use it in agriculture. You'll still leave the oil companies with \$1.2 billion in revenue, a 30 per cent increase since you took office; a 30 per cent increase since you took office. But you've got \$500 million to shore up some success in agriculture. That's not convincing very many farmers that you're doing a good thing for them. Not too many farmers across my constituency and the people I meet with are happy with what you're doing for the farmers.

You can give the companies a 30 per cent increase and you'd still have \$500 million left over to help out in agriculture. I think that's why people in Saskatchewan are beginning to ask questions and say, what are those guys doing in Regina? What are those guys doing in Regina?

I stopped and talked to a car salesman or a car dealer in my constituency yesterday morning. I stopped to see this car salesman. And by the way, Mr. Speaker, you look up in the record, you'll find that he used to be one of your supporters. This car salesman told me, he said, that line-up of cars you see sitting there is worth \$60,000. He said, I'm not going to get 1 cent more for those

vehicles before, or after, the budget, but this government is going to get \$3,000 out of me out of sales tax on those used vehicles.

He told me that if he'd sell a new Cadillac, if he'd sell a new Cadillac, a Gold Wing Cadillac today, Mr. Speaker, is worth \$46,000. He told me, if I'd sell that Cadillac, the government would have got \$2,300 revenue. But under the new program, today if you come in, the average guy will only pay \$500.

You talk about tax savings. You have tax savings for the rich. You have tax savings for the rich. But what about the young fellow that wants to buy a used vehicle? They're going to get that extra money out of the used vehicles. And I think that this government has added taxes on the poor people, has added taxes on people that can least afford it, but has given tax breaks, given revenue, given money to the oil companies. One point two million dollars more to the oil companies since you're in office, per year. But what have you got for farmers? What have you got for farmers?

He talked and he mentioned a little bit about the land bank. And I'd ask the member for Thunder Creek; if leasing land is so bad, how come the Farm Credit Corporation, how come your federal loaning arm is going into leasing land? If leasing land is so bad, why would Farm Credit Corporation decide to lease some land? How come they know what to do for farmers that are in trouble?

Why did you quit leasing programs? I have more and more farmers coming to me talking about getting a chance to lease some land rather than getting sucked in to buy it. He talked about developing the full potential. He talked about developing the full potential of this government and brags about lowering the interest rate to 12 per cent in the Saskatchewan Agricultural Credit Corporation. It's great to lower it by 2 per cent, but I mentioned this in my speech on the budget, Mr. Speaker.

Manitoba and the Manitoba Credit Corporation could lower it to 8 per cent. Farmers in Manitoba could get it for 8 per cent. But in Saskatchewan, 12 per cent is good enough. They're not oil men. They talk about advantages to farmers, tax credits for the wealthy. They talk about the tax credits.

But what about the beef stabilization plan? What about taking away the purple gas on farmers? Purple gas costs farmers in Saskatchewan \$68 million a year since you're in office. That's what we lost in an advantage of gas. Alberta still gives them 32 cents a gallon. Alberta still gives them 32 cents a gallon. You haven't got a penny. You haven't got a penny.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Thunder Creek made another line that most farmers in my constituency aren't going to appreciate, especially those in the livestock industry.; And he says, we put millions of dollars into the pockets of the livestock industry.

I would like to reiterate on this legislation something that I said in the throne speech; how much money did you take out of the pockets of the livestock men and the farmers when you changed the beef stabilization program? When you changed the rate of their investment of fixed costs from 55 per cent to 50 per cent the farmers \$4.70 an animal. When you changed the wean rate you cost him \$30 an animal. When you changed the feed input costs from 22 pounds of hay to 20 pounds, and you changed the trucking costs, you cost him another \$11 per animal.

Sixty-nine dollars a head since you took office — changes to the beef stabilization plan. Two hundred and fifty thousand head costs the farmers close to \$20 million. And you say you put money into the livestock industry — when you took \$20 million a year out.

Mr. Speaker,. this government says one thing and does another. They brag about they're going to talk about their performance, Mr. Speaker, this is a record of performance like we've never seen

before, a record where Robin Hood couldn't hold a torch to it. They take from the poor and give it to the rich. These people know how to do it.

I talked to one of the leading people in the construction industry, Mr. Speaker, and we had the privilege of visiting with this person, and he said, "Less than 1 per cent, less than 1 per cent of my equipment is sold to contractors." Less than 1 per cent of his sales of heavy equipment is going to contractors.

How come the contractors in Saskatchewan aren't buying any equipment if things are so good? How come the road builders aren't buying any new equipment? I'd like to know that.

The municipalities are buying a few graders. There's some graders, and there's some equipment being bought, but the contractors in Saskatchewan have been starved by this government and their programs. They have a little money, and they do a little business in repair, but they . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. It's my duty to inform the member his time has elapsed.

**Mr. Katzman:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to join in the debate on this motion. It's interesting to note that the member that just spoke talked about \$20 million, but he didn't talk about the \$37 million that was put into that plan by the Government of Saskatchewan in the stabilization plan.

He talked about purple gas and said that they've lost some money. Farm fuel never went up, and it was this government on this side of the House that demanded the federal government take off the federal tax off farm fuel, and it is now off. The member goes, who, who? That's what the member is — a big who, who.

Mr. Speaker, I sat to the rhetoric coming out of the member from across the side of the House and he talked about highways. Let's talk about highways. He was in the construction industry. I notice he's not there any more. But he was there, and he knows that the private sector is giving the government the best deal you've ever seen on road constructions in this province.

The cost of building a mile of road has dropped between 20 and 40 per cent per mile of construction. You tell me that's not a good deal, and I'd like to say it is. Any time we can save the people of Saskatchewan the money, that's what's important. And the private sector building roads in Saskatchewan is giving us a place that we never could compete with, and they are an efficient and good group making roads.

You know, I heard the member talk about retail sales growth, both the Leader of the Opposition and the member who spoke. What he didn't say was while retail sales were dropping in all the other parts of Canada, ours stayed up there. Therefore, if we stayed up, how can we grow as fast as those that have all fallen backwards. That's what he forgot to say in his comments. A one-sided comment. He doesn't give you the both sides and the argument — one-sided. He wants to mislead with half facts. Lay all the facts on and that way the people will make their decision. And that's why, in 1982, those guys got tossed out of government, down to eight members, and they're going lower than that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we heard about land bank. The Government of Saskatchewan under the NDP had one on nine to control every person, and the way that their document of 19 . . . the Manifesto said, was you've got to own the land and you control the people, and that's what they tried to do while they were government in '71 to '82. The biggest land speculators in the province of Saskatchewan were the NDP party.

(1545)

You know, you talked about cheap leases over there. Why did they give out leases that were cheap? Because they wanted to get everybody getting the land from them. That's the way they



want it because if they had the land and the economic fortune of the country, they could control you in the palm of their hand. That's the way they preferred to have it, Mr. Speaker.

You know, they talked about the gas and the oil companies. Well, I've been around this House for a while, Mr. Speaker, and I'll tell you something. Some of the deals that they gave in deferred taxes and drilling equity royalties for future time are unreal, and we had to negotiate them, hundreds of millions of dollars that they had in debts. And talking about debts, Mr. Speaker, for every time that we have to pay a dollar for our power bill, 40 cents of that goes for interest because of what they did when they were government. Don't tell me about the cost that put on farmers, because you put on more cost than everybody dreamt about.

Sask Tel is another one — 97 per cent debt when you people left, compared to equity. Sask Power, 117 per cent debt to equity. That's the kind of shape you left this government in, and if you want to go through all the rest of the Crown corporations where you buried your deficits since 1971, let's go at it. I know one difference was at least we put them up front. You hid them, played games, cooked the books. That's the way you guys did it.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Katzman:** — We want to talk about job creation. This government has done more job creation in this private sector than you guys ever dreamed of. Your system was they've got to be a government employee or don't have them. We create jobs in the private sector, and it's interesting to note that those people that create jobs, those jobs get a grant maybe for 5,000 the first time, but what percentage of those jobs stayed there with no more grant? Over 80 per cent. That's job creation, and jobs that stay. Not that, if it isn't government, it ain't no good, because that's the way you operated.

You want to talk about the agriculture sector. Let's talk about the agriculture sector. The first time in history people in the agriculture sector say, we can talk to the government; we can sit down with the agriculture caucus and the members of the government and lay out our concerns and find an equitable solution. Not a solution where you guys used to say, you do it our way or you don't do it at all. That's a new attitude, and the farmers of Saskatchewan appreciate it.

Energy — the energy industry is flourishing again in Saskatchewan. Why? We don't pay you for a dry hole. And some of your members may know what that's all about. We pay you for . . . we allow you to get back your expenses, if you drill a hole, and then you pay taxes and you pay them heavy . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, it's interesting to listen to the "ho, ho." It's interesting to note where the "ho, ho" came from, too, Mr. Speaker.

Economic development in Saskatchewan, as we all know, is going forward. Certainly, the member opposite can say the sales aren't up, the growth isn't up, but if you haven't gone backwards, if you haven't gone backwards, then the growth factor, if you're moving progressively, is always smaller in percentage.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I live along Highway 16, and I get over to watch the cars coming home on the long weekends, the Alberta plates constantly coming home. Saskatchewan people were exported, while they were government. Today, people are moving back to Saskatchewan, and we have a growth in our industry. We have a growth in our industry, and people are coming to those jobs. Certainly the unemployment's higher, but there's more people here today. There's more people working today than there ever has been. And that's part of the numbers that we have to look at.

Tourism — tourism is an important business to Saskatchewan. Rather than being in a fight with the tourist industry, as the NDP did during the last years of their government, we sit down and discuss with the tourist industry the things that can promote tourism in Saskatchewan, to cause people to come here to spend their dollars on fishing and hunting and other things that leave

good revenue to Saskatchewan. That's our second most important industry, behind agriculture.

Our budget this year, Mr. Speaker, dealt with education, the future of Saskatchewan, the brain trust that will make this province one of the best provinces in North America and in the world. Why did we put extra dollars in? Because we knew the importance of it. We moved from approximately 51 per cent of the educational cost to 54. When they were government they continually dropped the percentage that they were paying into education.

Which way is moving the right way? Sure, they may not be happy about the home owner's grant being gone, but, as you are aware, Mr. Speaker, for the first time this year the Liberal government has caused the taxation of that grant so people would have lost part of that anyway. And, when you consider the whole system, the people are getting a better value in the education for their dollar. In fact, they are not having to pay interest on their money waiting to get it back from the government.

The member from Morse made the comment about the gas tax. You get the deduction right at your bulk dealer. You don't have to send out that fancy cheque. That's called buying votes, and they were pros at it. And that system is gone. You give the deduction at the source. It should be the same way on your taxes as well.

Mr. Speaker, trade. You know, they condemn our trade policy. The Deputy Premier, former minister of agriculture, minister of trade in economic development, has broadened the markets of Saskatchewan, be it with the Hereford cattle or with other things that we're exporting.

I've had the pleasure, Mr. Speaker, of being involved in a sale that is just about to be announced. It's for potash — that because of an accidental meeting with a person. And that's important.

The importance of selling our products to the world: it causes jobs here. And that's what we have to do. And the motion put forward, Mr. Speaker, is:

This Assembly congratulates the government for the progress made in promoting investment, encouraging economic viability, and job creation . . .

And we have done it. Look at the records. Look at the records and you'll see them all. The growth is there. More people working. More population in Saskatchewan.

Agriculture. Agriculture's had a couple of . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — It's my duty to inform the members that the 75 minutes allowed under rule 16 have elapsed.

## PRIVATE BILLS

### SECOND READINGS

#### **Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to amend and consolidate An Act respecting Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society Limited and Saskatchewan Co-operative Financial Services Limited**

**Mr. Tusa:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to amend and consolidate An Act respecting Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society Limited and Saskatchewan Co-operative Financial Services Limited be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

**Bill No. 03 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate The House of Jacob (Beth Yakov) of the City of Regina**

**Mr. Rybchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move that Bill No. 03 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate The House of Jacob (Beth Yakov) of the City of Regina be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

**Bill No. 05 — An Act to incorporate the Saskatchewan Baptist Association**

**Mr. Johnson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move Bill No. 05 — An Act to incorporate the Saskatchewan Baptist Association be now read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

**MOTIONS**

**Resolution No. 3 — Securing An Economic Future for Northerners**

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my speech this afternoon I want to move the following motion:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to implement immediately concrete social and economic development measures of Northern Saskatchewan, forestry, and tourism, in order that northern residents may participate fully in a secure economic future for themselves and their communities.

I am very pleased to rise today in support of this motion, Mr. Speaker. It is an important one, and I invite all members on both sides of the House to join me in supporting it. Mr. Speaker, this motion before us calls on the conservative government to do only one thing: to implement at once some concrete and positive social and economic development measures for northern Saskatchewan. Why? In order that northern families and northern communities will be able to participate fully in the opportunities of the future; in order that northern people may have a secure future for themselves and their children, a future of hope and not unemployment; a future of productive employment and not welfare; a future of dignity and not neglect.

Conservatives have claimed in the House, Mr. Speaker, that northern Saskatchewan, while they don't say that it is unique, they say that it has to be an equal partner in Saskatchewan, and we fully agree in northern Saskatchewan that we want to be equal partners, and we feel that in order for us to be equal partners that we should enjoy the same type of a social life and economic life that the citizens in southern Saskatchewan do.

When we talk about the high unemployment in northern Saskatchewan running up into some communities, taking out professional people, as high as 85 and 90 per cent, and we take a look at the unemployment rate in southern Saskatchewan where it's running close to 10 per cent, we feel, in order to become equal partners, that we should be also entitled to that 10 per cent unemployment that the South has right now, not the 85 and 90 per cent that we are suffering with in northern Saskatchewan.

But it's quite easy, Mr. Speaker, when you have this high unemployment rate and high reliance on social services, to lose generations very fast. It doesn't take long to lose a generation. And I

say to the Conservative government that they are going to have to act and to have to act very fast, or we will not lose one generation or two generations, but we will lose many generations in northern Saskatchewan.

It is unfortunate that a motion of this sort has to be brought before the legislature. But it must be brought up because of this Conservative government's consistent and harmful neglect in northern Saskatchewan, betrayal of northern people.

First of all, they started off this winter by cancelling a \$250,000-a-year food transportation subsidy that had been in effect for a number of years to supply fresh fruit and vegetables and produce to communities such as Fond-du-Lac, and Stony Rapids, and Black Lake, and Wollaston; a program that I might add, Mr. Speaker, when I was up in Stony Rapids about a month to six weeks ago, I found out from mothers and fathers, I found out from teachers and school students that it was a program that was working well, costing the government \$250,000 a year. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that when that transportation subsidy was removed, immediately you saw the shelves completely bare of fresh fruit and vegetables and produce.

And there has been studies taken in the schools up there, and I will soon have access to that study as to just what has happened to the families. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is very serious is what has happened.

(1600)

A program that was successful, a program that was providing the fresh fruit, the fresh vegetables and meat, eggs, cheese to those northern residents has now been cut off with one sweep of the pen. And this is the type of programs that are beneficial and should never be touched, especially when they're working.

And some of the excuses was, not that it was costing too much money, but the wrong people were taking advantage of the program. Indications were that they cut the \$250,000 off because tourist operators were taking advantage of the program. Checking with tourist operators — and I can tell you this that there is no tourist operators in the Fond-du-Lac area, and very few tourist operators in the Stony Lake and Black Lake area — and they indicate that this is not true, that they don't take advantage of it, that that haul in most of their fresh produce as they have aircrafts coming in with the tourists.

Some of the other excuses were that they were going to try new schemes such as gardening and the growing of the vegetables. Well, one just has to live in Stony Rapids, in Black Lake, in Fond-du-Lac to realize that this is just a fallacy, because we know that the soil is sandy and heavy rock, we know that the growing seasons are very short. We also know that the citizens up in that area are out into their fish camps and their trapping camps during the summer. We know that ravens and dogs are running loose, and that it just doesn't make sense to replace a good program like this by trying to produce gardens up in that area.

Grants to local governments were frozen. Grants for northern economic development, and that was frozen. You take a look at the economic development activities in northern Saskatchewan in the last three years, and let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, there are very few, and the ones that we have are very small and are not producing a great deal of jobs.

Northern housing is another major problem in northern Saskatchewan. Housing has virtually been frozen. The department Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, is now constructing a number of apartments up in northern Saskatchewan. They will be rented out, but the individuals in northern Saskatchewan are just not going to be able to take advantage of that because the rent is just going to be too high, especially for young people who are unemployed or who are working on part-time jobs and small-paying jobs. And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker.

The only news the recent Conservative budget brought to the North was bad news. Jobs — they talk about creating jobs, and you can go into the North, or you can go to any place in Saskatchewan, and you'll find that the type of statistics that are being used by the Conservative government in Saskatchewan are statistics that include short-term jobs, three months in duration, four and a quarter an hour.

And I think the most cruel statistic that is being used today in Saskatchewan is the part-time jobs. You can go into the city of Saskatoon, and let me tell you, there are hundreds and hundreds of individuals who are working part time, but yet they go down as a statistic as working, and it's used to keep the level down. But there are so many individuals in this province, young and old alike, who are working for four and a quarter an hour at short-term jobs, or they are working at part-time jobs and at a low wage.

The biggest tax increase in Saskatchewan's history — no income tax, no sales tax on used vehicles, loss of property tax rebate, more taxes for ordinary people, but not higher taxation of the corporations or the rich.

Now let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, as I go around the province now and I get phone calls, and I'm getting letters from individuals who are saying, is that right that I am not going to get a rebate on my property taxes? Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that's not really going to hit home until July when the urban centres in this province have to pay their taxes and they find out that they're not going to get that rebate. That's when it's really going to sink home. And that's when the Conservative government are going to find themselves in real hot water.

So I suggest, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest to the other members over there, that maybe to solve that problem you would call an election and get that out of the way before these tax assessments come out, because that's when you're going to get in trouble.

There are a lot of people out there yet that don't really believe they're going to lose this tax. It's important to them. There are a lot of individuals who use that to go on a small vacation every summer. But it's not going to be there this summer. And that's when it's going to hit you hard.

Roads and highways, municipal services — all are needed in northern development. Mr. Speaker, when we talk about municipal services — and we see where the local government structure in northern Saskatchewan has come a long ways in the last 12 years. And now all of a sudden we don't know for sure what's going to happen. They see that there's an \$800,000 cut in the moneys that will be going to them towns in order to operate. And let me tell you, some of the towns up in northern Saskatchewan have already asked their employees to take a 9 per cent cut — a 9 per cent cut.

Trapping and fishing and hunting, they are on hard times. If you go into northern Saskatchewan right now and you take a look at the money that was returned to the trapper this year, you'll find it was very small. Not only did we have an extremely tough winter in northern Saskatchewan, but we had a massive timber-wolf problem up in northern Saskatchewan. And I indicated to the minister in charge of Parks and Renewable Resources that the problem was there.

The problem had been brought to me by trappers and fishermen, who tell me that they're running in packs of 30 and 32. I have seen the kills, Mr. Speaker. I have seen many, many kills where animals were just totally cleaned out by the timber-wolves. It's destructful. You see a timber-wolf who goes out, and he hunts 24 hours a day. There are no boundaries. He hunts 365 days of the year, and he kills, and he leaves it. And you can go down any river or lake or through the bush and will see a pile of ravens hollering and screaming. You just have to walk in there and you'll find a dead cow moose or a dead calf or a dead deer or a dead caribou. And this is what they're doing. It's wasteful.

Not only that, they are hitting the trappers. Trappers are telling me that they go to their traps and

all they find is the head left of a lynx — lynx that were bringing this year up to \$450 to the trappers. And that's pretty tough medicine for a trapper to take when he goes out and he finds that the timber-wolves, who are hungry and are roaming in packs, have come along and taken out of his trap a lynx worth \$1,000 or more, or a cross fox that's worth up 3, \$400. This is what's happening. Trappers have had a tough year.

Fishing has been tough. It's been cold, and we just have to have some security up there that the fish transportation subsidy is not going to be taken away so that fishermen can get back some of the losses this summer when we get open water and times get better.

We have to have new opportunities, and we have to make sure that the environment is safe up in northern Saskatchewan.

And I say in all sincerity, Mr. Speaker, that if you want to thin out the forest, I say you should not do it with chemicals. I say it should be done by individuals in this province who are looking for work. Let them go in there, set up a camp. Let them go in there and clean out the forest that you don't want, and stockpile it, sell it for firewood, whatever it may be, but don't use chemicals in northern Saskatchewan.

I have seen what has happened to chemicals that have been used on the farms in southern Saskatchewan. and I grew up in Big River on a farm, and it was no problem for me to go out on any day in the fall and hunt chicken and rabbits. They were all over the fields. I go into them communities, into Big River, Shell Lake, and in that area now, and let me tell you — and I talked to the farmers — and I don't see these chickens any more, and I don't see the rabbits. And they tell me it's because there's just been too many chemicals used on the land, and as a result the animals and the birds, they are eating that and they're not reproducing like they used to.

And the same thing is going to happen in northern Saskatchewan. They're not just going to have the timber-wolf to deal with; they're going to have to deal with chemicals. And that is something that we can't let happen, especially in a province where we have so many young people, especially in the summer — university students, grade 12 students — who are looking for jobs. Let's clean out them forests by using labour. Let's not use chemicals in northern Saskatchewan and take the chance of polluting our streams, polluting the animal.

You know what's going to happen up in northern Saskatchewan? If a bird eats the berries that are poisoned, they're going to do it in August when the berries are out — the young calf moose, the young deer, they're all eating the foliage. And they're going to go away from that area. They're going to die. Some other animal is going to feed on it, and it's just going to be a never-ending problem up there, and it'll just spread. And I say we cannot let this happen.

The wild rice. The Minister of Agriculture indicates that wild rice will solve a lot of our problems in northern Saskatchewan. And I say, yes, it's a cash crop, but let me tell you it's not a crop that one individual or any family can make a living on. It's a type of an industry, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, it's a type of an industry that complements fishing, trapping, and tourism.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture, that you have to make sure that you don't hold back on the wild rice, but you have to also build up the tourism, the commercial fishing, and the trapping, because every one complements the other. Most wild rice producers in northern Saskatchewan are commercial fishermen, or are trappers, or have tourist operations. And I say to you, just get up there and make sure that all parts of it work, not just the wild rice or the agriculture part of it, but get the tourism and fishing and everything going.

Mining. There's no two ways about that, Mr. Speaker, mining is vitally important to northern Saskatchewan. I can tell you, if we were to close down or to take out the northern content from Cluff Lake today, and Key Lake, and Wollaston Lake, then we would have a massive unemployment rate in northern Saskatchewan.

It's vitally important that surface leases that are in place are honoured. And I ask the minister in charge of SMDC to get up there and make sure that these surface leases are honoured, because it is so important to give Northerners that opportunity to take advantage. And we're only asking for 50 per cent of the jobs. And that's not bad, Mr. Speaker, because we're dealing strictly with the mines in northern Saskatchewan.

Southerners are not coming down and asking for jobs in the potash mines or any other mines that you have in southern Saskatchewan, the coal mines. All they're asking for is a fair share up there. And I ask this government, the Conservative government and the minister in charge of SMDC, to get up there and make sure that these surface leases are carried out, and that we get our 50 per cent share of the jobs not only in Amok, but in Key Lake and Wollaston Lake also.

The North has many opportunities. What is needed is the commitment on the part of the government to enable northern people to seize those opportunities, not to be put down. Not to be put down, Mr. Speaker.

Last summer was a good example in northern Saskatchewan when we had an outbreak of fires — one of the worst rash of forest fires that we've ever had in northern Saskatchewan. And what did they do? They didn't want to hire Northerners. They were unemployed in the communities, but they didn't want to hire them, because somebody suggested that the Northerners were lighting the fires.

And, Mr. Speaker, there were hundreds of young men waiting to go to fight fire, and there was just no way that they could go. I saw them standing there. Then all of a sudden we see more aircrafts and more aircrafts coming in, and they were trying to fight these fires. When the smoke would clear, they would go in. But most of the time, they really couldn't fight the fire. They couldn't fight the fire with water bombers at night, when fires should be fought, and they should be fought by hand.

That wasn't so bad, Mr. Speaker, but then all of a sudden there was a fleet of water bombers that were brought in from Ontario — brought in from Ontario to fight fires in northern Saskatchewan at a cost of millions of dollars. And I say that, at a cost of millions of dollars, and yet we had unemployed northern Saskatchewan residents waiting and wanting to go to work, but could not. And we will get the figures. We will get the figures.

(1615)

The Minister of Highways, he doesn't believe this. He's laughing when I say billions of dollars. But these figures will come out as just how much was spent on aircraft, how much was spent on individuals working in northern Saskatchewan. And you're going to see that there is a tremendous disproportionate amount of funds that were spent on aircraft to fight these fires, and a very small amount on individuals.

Not until I wrote the Premier a letter indicating what was taking place did we get some hiring in northern Saskatchewan and then it was getting late in the season.

The Conservative government has its priorities all wrong. They cut \$250,000 from a program to help provide a fresh food subsidy for northern families, to help ensure that children have fresh milk and food. But in this budget, they have increased the social assistance budget by \$30 million — \$30 million, but yet they cut off a program for 250,000 that was beneficial to the residents of northern Saskatchewan. Cuts in fresh food subsidies, funding for economic development frozen, but a huge increase in the welfare budget because they anticipate a further big increase in the welfare case-loads.

Needs for northern housing. Needs for expansion of the West Side Community College. Once

again community college is very important to train northerners so that they can take part in the jobs, not just jobs in northern Saskatchewan, but jobs any place in the nation where they can get them.

I therefore urge the government opposite to take immediate and concrete and positive steps for the social and economic development of northern Saskatchewan, and I invite all members to join me in support of this motion.

Mr. Speaker, the people of northern Saskatchewan do not ask for much. They want jobs, not welfare; and they want security, not short-term, four and a quarter on our jobs. They want good long-term jobs where they can have some security, that their families can have some security. They want the opportunity to raise their families in dignity and hope, not frustration and despair.

When you take a look at the families up there who have been working for many years and then all of a sudden they lost that job, then you see the problems that take place. For the first time in many years there was families who had a home that had three or four bedrooms in; their young daughters had a room of their own. They never had that before. Now all of a sudden they are on the verge of losing that. Mother and father had a job. They had securities. They had televisions and cars. Now they are on the verge of losing that plus losing their homes. This is not what they want. This is not what they want, even though we live in a unique region of the province.

If you live in La Loche and yet a toothache and you want to get a tooth filled you have to drive 210 miles one way just to get that done. And I ask you and other members to put yourself in that position and you would realize that things are unique in northern Saskatchewan, and that's only way half up the constituency when you get to La Loche.

Just imagine what it's like when you live in Stony Rapids and Fond-du-Lac and Black Lake, Camsell Portage, 40 miles south of the North-West Territories. Then let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, and I tell the other members here, northern Saskatchewan is a unique area. It has to be treated that way, and I would sincerely hope that you will all give the support for what I have just said.

They don't want charity or gifts from the Conservative government. All they want is a fair deal and an honest break. They want an end to the double standard policies of this government — one standard for Saskatchewan families, another standard for big oil companies; tax increases for Saskatchewan families, tax breaks for the big oil companies. My colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg explained that quite eloquently here prior to my speech. And above all they want an end to the Conservative government's consistent policy of neglect and betrayal of the North.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I so move my motion.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to second my colleague's motion, the member from Athabasca, who has very straightforwardly laid out his concerns about northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that all members of this Assembly agree with me when I say that that member has done an excellent job in his years here in the Assembly of bringing forward that concerns, both to the previous NDP government and to the Conservative government, concerns that he had in northern Saskatchewan. But, Mr. Speaker, I think that all would agree, as well, that since 1982 his concerns have basically fallen on deaf ears.

Mr. Speaker, of the 64,000 people who now I find themselves on welfare in province, a large number of them come from the northern district, the constituency of Cumberland and Athabasca, and I want to say that, having toured into that area in the past month, I have first-hand knowledge of what 90 per cent unemployment does to people from northern Saskatchewan.



We had an opportunity to see what the crime rate, what happens to the crime rate when you have 90 per cent of the people, the main bread-winners in that area of the province, without meaningful employment. And, Mr. Speaker, we heard from people the day after the budget who were phoning into open-line shows who said the highway situation was so bad in northern Saskatchewan on certain sections of the Hanson Lake road that people had to detour for 60 or 80 miles to get around the pot-holes that the Minister of Highways had no time and no money to fill.

My colleague has talked about the food subsidy of 250,000 for fresh food that has been taken away by this government. Now to put that in perspective, the allowance that ministers have, the expense account of four ministers, would have covered off that total fresh-food allowance. Four members of the Executive Council with expense accounts, like the member for Wilkie, would have covered off that food subsidy.

And I find it interesting, as well, that in the era when we have a government that is allowing liquor advertising on all of the outlets that go into the North and other parts of the province, that while the fresh food subsidy was taken off of things like lettuce and milk and other vegetables, that the subsidy that they have in place for liquor was not removed and was not changed.

Believe it or not, the subsidy that allows you to buy a 26 of Crown Royal, or Three Feathers, or whatever people buy in La Ronge, is the same price as it is down town Regina. And I say if you're looking at subsidizing liquor into northern Saskatchewan, as a government, then you should look very clearly at maybe changing the priorities in taking it off of alcoholic beverages and putting it on fresh food.

And I say to you, Mr. Minister, and, Mr. Speaker, that many of the problems associated with high unemployment in the rest of the province, where we find the crime rate, for example, the violent crime rate in Saskatoon and Regina going up by 100 per cent last year, tracking very closely with the unemployment rate, that these trends are only magnified in northern Saskatchewan. We have an ever-increasing flow of young people coming out of northern Saskatchewan to fill the correctional centres in Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

We see the same massive tax increases at the same time on the people of northern Saskatchewan; the removal of the property improvement grant, the increased tax on automobiles. And many of the people in the North, when they buy automobiles, a much higher percentage will buy used automobiles, will now for the first time be paying a sales tax on those vehicles.

And I agree with my colleague from Athabasca when he says the same taxing structure is not applying to those in Regina and Saskatoon who have a great deal of money and can afford to trade their automobiles, expensive automobiles, every year. The example has been pointed out over and over again — and I don't think we can comment on it too often — of a person who buys a \$40,000 vehicles every year will have a tax cut of \$1,500, while many people in the North will, for the first time, be paying 5 per cent on used automobiles, whether it's a car or a truck.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the 100 per cent increase in unemployment in this province, and when we talk about the massive increase in welfare in this province, northern Saskatchewan identifies that clearer than any other part of the province.

And when we talk about unemployment in Saskatchewan, ever increasing under this administration, that is not what is happening in other parts of the country. In places like Manitoba the unemployment rate has actually dropped by 2 or 3 per cent over the last three years, while in Saskatchewan it has increased by a similar amount. And I say that when people tell us, members of the Conservative Party tell us that the government has no responsibility in creating an atmosphere for employment, Mr. Speaker, they are misleading the people of this province. And I say no place else are they misleading the people more than in northern Saskatchewan.

And I say that the unemployment rate of 90 or 95 per cent is a disgrace to this province, and that when they sanctimoniously talk about helping the people of Ethiopia, that I would ask the member of Morse, who goes on the TV — and I agree with the principle of helping people in other countries — that he would take a tour, that he would take a tour to northern Saskatchewan and see the plight of some of his fellow Saskatchewan friends and neighbours who are living in desperate situation without food to eat. Because I want to tell you that we who went to northern Saskatchewan saw a situation where in La Ronge (and this is in probably one of the better-off areas in northern Saskatchewan) where houses are boarded up, where people are living together because they can't rent individual houses any more, and they live without fresh food because of the subsidy being cut.

If the member from Morse is honest in his concern for his fellow human beings, then he should be going to northern Saskatchewan, looking at the plight of the people and helping us bring the government to its senses when it comes to dealing with the plight of northern Saskatchewan people.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Muller:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure every member of this Assembly can remember the report that Justice Noble issued when the NDP were in office. Justice Noble described the NDP department of northern Saskatchewan as a bureaucracy run amok.

I'm sure that every member of this Assembly can also remember the Progressive Conservative pledge to clean up the mess created by the NDP department of northern Saskatchewan. This government pledged to tackle the tough economic problems of the Northern. I'm proud to tell the House that we've been true to our words.

I look at the negative motion introduced by the member from Athabasca. He paints a picture of doom and gloom in northern Saskatchewan. I can tell the MLA from Athabasca that people of northern Saskatchewan are no longer buying the NDP picture of doom and gloom.

The government believes in progress in the North, in the critical industries of fishing, trapping, and tourism. This government is making positive effort to ignite the northern economy. The nine and five-eighths per cent loans program for small business is an example of a program that'll help northern Saskatchewan.

The Minister of Tourism and Small Business is going to tour northern Saskatchewan to explain how the loans program for small business can apply to northern Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the real signs of economic progress in the North — take, for example, the wild rice industry. The wild rice crop was over 1 million pounds last year. Outfitters in northern Saskatchewan — yes, they failed. Their answer was big government in northern Saskatchewan. Control the lives of all the people in northern Saskatchewan. The department of northern Saskatchewan was not the answer to building northern Saskatchewan.

(1630)

Mr. Speaker, during the 1970s the NDP failed to develop the greatness of northern Saskatchewan — yes, they failed. Their answer was big government in northern Saskatchewan. Control the lives of all the people in northern Saskatchewan. The department of northern Saskatchewan was not the answer to building northern Saskatchewan.

Let me review the record of the NDP in northern Saskatchewan. They spent most of their budget on government in the North. They did not invest in the North. The NDP treated the North with talk and no action.

We, as a Progressive Conservative government, have a vision for the North. We have a vision based on positive programs and action. We encourage tourism in the North. We encourage

small business in the North.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government has a proud record in northern Saskatchewan. Let me review our record in northern Saskatchewan. We established the Northern Affairs Secretariat, a Northern Affairs Secretariat to work hand in hand with the people in northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP isolated the people of northern Saskatchewan from the mainstream of government in this province. The NDP treated as second-class citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government believes that the people in the North should receive the same government services as the people in any other part of the province, Mr. Speaker, not a department of northern Saskatchewan that worked against the people.

Allow me to quote from Dale Eisler's article in the Regina *Leader-Post*, May 17, 1984. He's described the DNS as a bureaucratic structure with a checkered history. The same article said that there's ample evidence of uncontrolled rents and mortgage payments by DNS.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the DNS was no good for northern Saskatchewan. DNS was a monster that threw millions of dollars into the wind. It did nothing to encourage economic growth in the North, and that is why this government abolished DNS.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government has developed a comprehensive plan for the North:

1. We established a process for the co-ordination of northern advisory services;
2. The establishment of a process to bring the people of northern Saskatchewan into mainstream of the province;
3. A comprehensive economic plan for the North;
4. Working closely with northern people for northern interests.

The NDP, Mr. Speaker, would phase out uranium mining that would spell ruin for people in the North. It would put over 10,000 people out of work. That is the doom and gloom of the NDP opposition, Mr. Speaker.

As Saskatchewan is celebrating its 80th year in Canada, I believe that northern Saskatchewan has a great future. This Progressive Conservative government has a northern vision. We believe in the people of northern Saskatchewan.

The recent budget introduced by the Minister of Finance confirms our faith in the people of northern Saskatchewan. Job creation is a good example. We are investing money to create meaningful jobs for the people in the North and all over the province.

Mr. Speaker, this Assembly cannot, and should not, take the motion of the member for Athabasca seriously. After all, he knows, as we all do, that the Progressive Conservative government has been, since 1982, implementing concrete social and economic development measures for northern Saskatchewan.

We believe in a secure economic future for the North. We believe strongly in our tourism and forest industry. Mr. Speaker, this government is optimistic about the future in northern Saskatchewan. Let the word go up to the North that we listen and we care. Let the word go forth that it is a Progressive Conservative government that believes in the North, and it is a Progressive Conservative government that invests and builds in the North.

Back in 1959, John Diefenbaker talked about northern vision. In 1985, as a Progressive Conservative government, are carrying out northern vision with our positive program for the North.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will be amending the motion, seconded by the member from Prince Albert:

That Resolution 3 be amended by deleting the words “urge the Government of Saskatchewan . . . immediately,” where they appear in the first and second line, and substituting:

would commend the government for implementing therefor.

The debate continues concurrent on the motion and the amendment.

**Mr. Meagher:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened with great interest to the member from Athabasca in particular, and also that expert on the North, the member for the South, commenting on this motion, and really, to me it really clearly demonstrates the basic or fundamental difference between our approach to economic development and the approach of the previous administration. They had no faith at all in the people in northern Saskatchewan. They decided to relegate that part of the province to a colony of the South and demonstrate their paternalistic attitude toward those people, like they were second-class citizens, that they should have special this and special that and subsidies and other forms of paternalistic development.

I hear the member from Shaunavon, for an example, suggesting that there's some kind of subsidy on booze and that that should have been taken off and that they should pay a higher price for whisky in Buffalo Narrows than they do in Shaunavon.

And that demonstrates exactly what their attitude is toward the people of northern Saskatchewan. They do not want them to be part of the general population of this province and to be treated in the same way. Well, we do. We do expect them to be part of the province of Saskatchewan and be treated in the same way, and they are responding very well.

We have taken a number of initiatives as a government to assist in the economic development of the people of northern Saskatchewan without telling them how they must do . . . what they must do, and where they must do it. We have faith in the people of the North and they're responding.

I was born in Emma Lake, in that Emma Lake district of northern Saskatchewan. And I know when I was a young fellow, I had to leave my home to find a job, as did most everyone else in that community at the time under the régime of the previous CCF/NDP government. Most of us had to go out to that busy, smoky city of Calgary or Edmonton to take up a trade. But we took that responsibility upon ourselves.

Emma Lake's a beautiful area to live in, but if you want to work in the plumbing trade, it just wasn't the place to be. And that's one of the things that the people of northern Saskatchewan may have to accept, that you may want to live alongside of Christie Lake in beautiful northern Saskatchewan, but let's not at the same time be whining and crying about being unemployed, because they may not be compatible. If you want to work at a building construction trade for instance, you may have to go where the work is. And the people of northern Saskatchewan accept that. The NDP didn't. They'd rather take a lot of other people's money and shovel it into the communities and attempt to make artificial economic activity there that was doomed to fail.

I can recall the old NDP DNS department in their economic development loan fund, for an example. There was a classic example of economic development, socialist style. You lend people money, lend fishermen money to finance an operation that may not be viable. They maintained this fund on the books. The member for Athabasca knows this is true. This is where many of his constituents are. They maintained these loan funds on the books as current, when some of the

loan recipients had been dead for several years, Mr. Speaker, and there was nothing for security at all except the fish in the lake that they couldn't catch.

Speaking of fish, they don't vote, so they got the same kind of priority with the previous government. We didn't . . . This new government recognized that tourism is an important business, and we did some things with it. We started the fish enhancement program, for an example, which does, in fact, stimulate the tourist industry and the fishing industry. Rather than lending money to people to see if you can buy their vote, and then subsidizing it forever with someone else's money, we've taken the position that we should have economic development up there that makes some sense, some business sense.

In the area of tourism, for an example, we've taken a number of issues of initiatives that . . . We've restructured the northern revolving fund and new loans in maintaining 450 person-years of employment in northern Saskatchewan. We financed and support the wild rice corporation which is a successful processing plant there in northern Saskatchewan. We've helped them to develop the apple culture industry up there, and developed an assistance to the northern beef jerky production in La Ronge. It's another successful operation.

We've as well . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, the member for Athabasca mentions forestry. Forestry is an important industry in northern Saskatchewan. The member for Athabasca joins with the hysterical, emotional argument that herbicides should not be used in the forestry industry. He completely avoids the issue that herbicides like Roundup were being used all over Saskatchewan. There's more Roundup taken out of the Canadian Tire store in Prince Albert and put right on our gardens than PAPCO proposed to use. It was a small, small area of northern Saskatchewan.

But no, the member doesn't want to, he doesn't want to see the forestry industry succeed in northern Saskatchewan. He'd rather support the radicals that block roads and bring out old films of B '52s spraying Vietnam as an argument against the use of herbicides in northern Saskatchewan. That is not a responsible position to take.

We've made about 30 or 35 years of bad forest management decisions in this province. If we want forestry to be an industry that's going to fly, we've got to start doing something right for a change, and let's not get on these band wagons. I'd like to know where the member for Athabasca stands on that issue.

He makes the suggestion that we could employ people to go in by hand and do all this work. He doesn't recognize at all that the forest industry is competitive, like others. That's like suggesting to the farmers that they should weed their fields with forced labour of some kind. It's an Ethiopian decision toward economic development. I'm surprised they don't suggest that we fly all the people out of northern Saskatchewan with Soviet airplanes, relocate them, like they are doing in Ethiopia.

But I'm suggesting to you, Mr. Speaker, that this motion should recognize that those very things that the member for Athabasca has placed in the motion are being done by this government in Saskatchewan, but it's being done with the help and support of the people of northern Saskatchewan as opposed to government imposing these decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say in forestry as well, I want to add some of the initiatives that we've taken. In 1983 the new department initiated a new forest licence management agreement with the view of making some sensible forestry decisions. We want to make long-term security of tenure and wood supply. One of the things that the previous government didn't recognize in forestry is that you can't just mine the forests, you've got to farm it. It's a resource that you just can't go out and mine and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

The member from Athabasca wants to know what we're doing along the highway to Shellbrook.

There's a good example of exactly what we're doing. The forestry along the highway — the Shellbrook highway — is diseased and mature. That forestry needs to be harvested in order to avoid a disaster in that forest. Other countries, European countries for an example, don't hide their forestry operations from the general public as the past administration has done and try to conceal that they are doing clear-cuts. For an example, in Sweden they do clear-cutting right along the highways so the public can see that this a farming operation; that there are trees being replanted to replace the clear-cuts. Here we have been trying to hide it as if it's some kind of a disaster that should be kept from the public. it's not. Farming the forest is the proper approach and one that we're taking and that the previous administration did not take.

(1645)

As well, in forestry, we are making several initiatives that I think are going to provide real jobs in a viable industry. Making a political decision to build a mill some place just to buy a few votes has been the past performance of the previous government. Another reason we're facing serious problems in the forestry industry is because decisions were made for political reasons as opposed to good, sound business or commercial reasons.

In June of 1984 the province of Saskatchewan and the government of Canada, Mr. Speaker, entered into a five-year, \$28 million forest development agreement designed to strengthen forest resource management in Saskatchewan. One of the areas that we've been woefully, woefully neglected for years, and the member for Athabasca knows that to be true.

A review of The Forest Act and regulations has been completed as a part of the government's legislative amendment and reform process. Work is now proceeding toward the development and presentation of a modern set of streamlined legislation and procedures which are consistent with effective long-term use, and conservation of Saskatchewan's forest resource.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to provide work, and jobs, and economic activity in the forest industry in northern Saskatchewan, we've got to become realistic and make some decisions that are in tune with the real economic demands of that industry and be competitive and out in the world — in the market-place.

The relationship between the establishment of productive job creation programs, using funds from social program areas, and the enlargement and enhancement of provincial timber resources, have become more clearly identified and understood under this government, under this administration.

This situation is reflected in the recent and rapid implementation of a \$1 million set of forest resource improvement projects designed by DPRR (Department of Parks and Renewable Resources) and administered by the New Careers Corporation. We're employing people, Mr. Speaker, to work in reforestation, which is an area that's been neglected for years in the province of Saskatchewan.

Over the period of 1982 and '84 the department will have contracted the planting of 24.1 million seedlings, as well as providing an additional 9.3 million seedlings to the forest industry, Mr. Speaker. Now that's performance.

In addition, approximately 2.2 million seedlings were provided by the department to several organizations and government agencies. In 1984 Saskatchewan's forest nurseries marked the production of the hundred millionth seedling for the reforestation of Saskatchewan's forests, Mr. Speaker. A hundred million seedlings have been planted in this province.

Since 1982 the department has continued its program of expanding the forest inventory information available to the industry, another area that was woefully inadequate under the previous government. Not only were the private operators excluded from the forest, but the

information that they needed to make intelligent decisions were denied them by the previous government.

As of September 1984 the department has prepared maps for 33,500 square kilometres of forest land and updated another 11,000 square kilometres of previously mapped areas now changed by forest fire and harvesting activities. So we're making this information available to the industry so that they can make intelligent decisions relating to their operations.

Since April 1, 1982 the department has acquired 40,000 square kilometres of aerial photography in the commercial forest zone. All of this activity, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you, is being done by this government in support of a forest industry that will provide real jobs for the people of northern Saskatchewan, and not be subjected to the paternalistic welfare attitude of the old DNS.

Since April the 1st the department has established 7,453 volume sample plots in the commercial forest zone. Since April the department has introduced a square kilometre update system of the inventory program, thus allowing faster and more efficient updating procedures.

In July 1983 the department entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Canadian Forestry Service, designed to enhance the contribution of the forest research program of the federal government to the management of forest resources in Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the forestry industry this government has taken a number of initiatives, and we are confident, and I am confident as the member for Prince Albert, that the forest industry will provide the greatest opportunity for Northerners in the decades ahead.

Mining is another industry that the member for Athabasca touched upon, and he made mention of the fact that a Southerner can apply for a job at a potash mine, and that's very true. But, I mean, a Northerner could apply for a job at a potash mine. And that's very true. There's no restrictions upon him coming to southern Saskatchewan and working in a potash mine if he likes.

But in northern Saskatchewan, if the NDP ever get the opportunity, they will certainly be restricting the activities of the people in northern Saskatchewan as it relates to mining. Their suggestion of closing the uranium industry, for an example, would put 4,500 people in the province right now, employed in that industry, out of work, Mr. Speaker. That's their approach to economic development in northern Saskatchewan. That industry generates \$42.5 million of revenue right now, Mr. Speaker. The NDP party, if they ever get an opportunity, would love to take that revenue away from the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the uranium industry alone is the largest employer in northern Saskatchewan. It employs almost half of the residents of that part of the province. That's a major industry, and a growth industry. Uranium mining will provide the energy needs for the rest of the world in the decades ahead, and it's a safe, clean fuel. It's been proven to be that, in Europe and in other parts of the world. And again, they would rather join the radicals and take the position that somehow mining uranium is going to contribute to a war or to nuclear weapons. It's another hysterical, emotional argument that's not based on fact, and it's done to the detriment of the people of northern Saskatchewan — the very people they claim to be supporting.

I don't know how they sleep at night with those kinds of arguments. If they really and truly were in support of economic development in northern Saskatchewan, they would take the position that the uranium mining industry is vital to that part of this province's economic future and get off that bandwagon and distance themselves from the crazies who are out there camping on public property, and try to make the connection between uranium mining and nuclear war.

The government has paid attention to the North, Mr. Speaker. This government has invested \$3,155,755 in job-creation projects in Athabasca and Cumberland constituencies alone since this

administration took office, and that's a very substantial investment, and the members for those two constituencies should be up there heralding that kind of activity instead of trying to suggest that it's all doom and gloom.

It's created 580 jobs, Mr. Speaker — this, the government's investment — and which totalled 13,153 work weeks. That's the government's investment directly. But we don't believe the government is going to be the final solution to the economic problems of northern Saskatchewan. The government's efforts up there — they've tried and failed. After 11 years of DNS shovelling taxpayers' money out like it was going out of style, the problems of northern Saskatchewan were not solved. Alcoholism, the social problems that are there and are recognized, were not solved. In fact, they were made much, much worse.

People do not want to be treated like peons or colonialists in their own land. They want the full rights and freedoms of citizenship of Saskatchewan. And freedom means responsibility. You don't have freedom if you're tied down by a welfare government that wants you kept . . . And I believe they want to keep those people in that position.

That's exactly what they want. Because you can't manipulate people who have some freedom — some economic freedom and some independence. It's much easier to say to those people you must vote this way or you won't get this hand-out. It's very difficult to intimidate someone who is making a good living on his own, or running his own business and has some degree of independence and integrity.

That's the real reason . . . That's the hidden agenda of the NDP — keep the people of northern Saskatchewan subjugated to a welfare mentality forever, and we have an unlimited supply of support in northern Saskatchewan.

We're not going to support that contention. We're going to free the people of northern Saskatchewan so that they can reach their potential, which is, in my view, absolutely unlimited. In fact, the future of Saskatchewan is in the North. That's where our real economic development is going to take place.

And I'm proud to support the amendment to this motion and vote against the motion. And I beg leave to adjourn debate. It being near 5 o'clock, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.