

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Clerk:** — I present and lay on the Table the following petitions for private bills by Mr. Baker — Of Canadian Bible Society, South Saskatchewan District, of the city of Regina in the Province of Saskatchewan, and Canadian Bible Society, North Saskatchewan District, of the city of Saskatoon in the Province of Saskatchewan; and by Mr. Glauser — of Medical Services Incorporated of the city of Saskatoon in the Province of Saskatchewan.

### NOTICE OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday next I shall move:

That this Assembly urge the Saskatchewan government to take steps immediately to refund the 5 per cent sales tax collected from purchasers of used cars, trucks, and other used vehicles, and to remove the unfair flat tax which was imposed upon Saskatchewan taxpayers.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Thursday next move:

That this Assembly urge the Saskatchewan government to take steps immediately to increase the numbers of health care workers in Saskatchewan health care institutions, to expand Saskatchewan's preventative health care system and to improve the level of health care services available to residents in rural Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Engel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Thursday next move:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to take immediate steps to deal with the high farm input costs by taking measures necessary, number one, to reduce the cost of farm fuel by 32 cents a gallon; reduce the cost of farm fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides; and restore property tax relief for farmers.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Thursday next move:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to address the urgent needs of northern Saskatchewan and to restore and improve the basic health care, educational, and social services which the government has neglected in the North.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday next I shall move:

That this Assembly urge the Saskatchewan government to introduce measures to enable our senior citizens to live in comfort, safety, and dignity, and to create an agency of government to be responsible for addressing the special needs our senior citizens.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Thursday next move:

That this Assembly urge the Saskatchewan government to oppose vigorously the federal government's attack on Saskatchewan farmers proposed in the Nielsen task force report on program review which recommends: paying the Crow benefit to the producers; discontinuing farm improvement loans; dismantling the Canadian Wheat Board; cancelling railway branch line rehabilitation; increasing crop insurance premiums paid by producers. I so move.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lusney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Thursday next move:

That this Assembly urge the Saskatchewan government to increase immediately its funding for the construction and maintenance of the provincial highway system which has been allowed, through neglect and misplaced priorities, to deteriorate over the last four years.

**Mr. Yew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Thursday next move:

That this Assembly urge the Saskatchewan government to oppose vigorously the federal government's plans to cut its share of funding for health care and post-secondary education.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly, and to welcome here today a group of 22 visiting exchange students who are seated in the west gallery. They are visiting here for some time from Germany and are here today with instructors and the principal and the chaperons associated with the Luther College High School in Regina. These students range from grades 9 to 13.

We're certainly delighted to take the opportunity to welcome you here to the Assembly this afternoon. We trust that your time will be a very enjoyable one. And I do want to ask one of my colleagues to also introduce a special student in the group.

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members the Assembly, Marcus Flohr from Bonn. Marcus is a terrific young man who's staying with my family. We've been involved with several of these exchanges — very successful exchanges, I may say. I know I've discussed this with the Leader of the Opposition before, who agrees with me, and his family have been involved also.

I'd like to point out to the members of the Assembly that Marcus speaks impeccable English, and, to the member from Prince Albert who calls me the oatmeal savage, I plan to take lessons from Marcus. And I'd be happy to meet with the group following question period, in my office, room 340. Please welcome the students.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Engel:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't know if there's anybody on that side that is bold enough to try it or not, but I would like at this time, herzliche willkommen and I hope that they enjoy their time here.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tusa:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to the House, through you, 22 students from the Robert Southey School at Southey, Saskatchewan, who are seated in the west gallery. They are here this afternoon to tour the legislature, and I'm looking forward to meeting with them at 2:30.

I trust that they will be edified by the question period, and I know that they will certainly be impressed by the calibre of answers they will receive to the questions.

I thank you very much.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Flat Tax on Net Income

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Premier, and it has to do with the record tax increases introduced in his government's last budget, as well as the budget which is planned for next week.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the laughter from members opposite indicates the lack of reliance that people can place upon the public . . . (inaudible) . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — My question to the Premier is this: can the Premier assure Saskatchewan taxpayers that he understands that the last provincial budget was unfair to ordinary people, and that he will commence to change that, and specifically, can you assure Saskatchewan taxpayers that this year's provincial budget will eliminate the unfair flat tax on net income which makes Saskatchewan virtually the only province, besides Quebec, which has, not one income tax, but two?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, it's been the position of our administration to reduce the taxes for ordinary Saskatchewan people. If you look at the tax changes since 1982, people who might be low income or on welfare or whatever in 1981, 1980, paid in the neighbourhood of \$150 million tax on gasoline, and now they don't pay that in the province of Saskatchewan. If you take the ordinary Saskatchewan person who used to pay sales tax on children's clothes, now they don't. If you look at the Saskatchewan people who used to pay sales tax on the utility bills in Saskatchewan under the NDP, now they don't under a Conservative administration.

Mr. Speaker, we said many times that the wealthy, the very, very wealthy in the province of Saskatchewan, like the railroads, like the high-income people, should be paying their fair share of tax. In Saskatchewan the flat tax hits the very wealthy, and 97 per cent of the people who didn't use to pay tax at all, now pay tax. The taxes we have levied against banks, against large businesses, against railroads, were not levied under the previous administration.

So, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the tax changes for families, the tax reductions for ordinary Saskatchewan people here in this provinces versus the tax increases on railroads, the tax increases on big business, and you look at the tax increases that we have levelled against high-income people that never paid any tax at all, then, Mr. Speaker, you will see that families in Saskatchewan are getting a better tax break under our administration than they ever did under the previous government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier at least assure Saskatchewan people that he will restore the property tax rebates to home owners, farmers, and small-business men that he took away from them last year and which were available under the previous administration?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, when we talk about money into Saskatchewan families' pockets, then we have to look at the millions and millions of dollars that this administration has put into the pockets of family people and home owners and farmers across this province.

When interest rates were 22 per cent, you just sat there and did nothing. We protected families. No place else in Canada was there any protections — NDP governments and not one bit of protection against high interest rates, and we were there to protect them. Two to \$300 a month, let alone \$200 a year. We were the first to initiate it and it was right here in this province.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at 6 per cent money to farmers all across this province, and they're up to \$900 million is out in agriculture, and you're comparing that to a 200 and \$300 grant . . . Well I know you like grants. I mean the previous administration was into grant this and grant that, and grant this and grant that. They may not . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll grant you, you might not

like this Grant, but he's going to be around for a while.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, in protecting families in Saskatchewan, I'm sure that the Leader of the Opposition knows that high interest rates hurt families and they hurt farmers and they hurt small business, and we have put hundreds of millions of dollars into the pockets of Saskatchewan families that weren't there before.

And when it comes to tax changes, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to tax changes, if you can reduce the sales tax on items where families spend their money, and they may not have any money — people on welfare have to pay sales tax — and you can take it off children's clothes, and you can take it off gasoline, you take it off their power bills, it's much more important to those people than it is saying we're going to have a rebate system for the rich or for the wealthy. In this province, we initiated a flat tax so that the wealthy, for once and for all, wouldn't avoid any tax at all, and now they pay in this province, and I think that's fair.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier acknowledge that the flat tax of which he is so proud allows the taxpayer to deduct, before the calculation of that tax, any loopholes he may be able to take advantage of by way of MURBs or investment in movies and videos but does not allow a taxpayer to deduct for flat tax purposes his contribution to his church or charity. Will he admit that?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll admit that we're using the federal tax form. And as I've said in this House many times, I've asked the federal government to reform the federal tax system as well as the federal tax form. And I could think of a better place to put that flat tax on that form than currently exists, but we're dealing with the federal system, what it's designed to do. And the direction, I'm sure the hon. member agrees, is to get people who have never paid any tax at all. And in this province there were a large number of people who didn't pay any income tax. Now under this system they pay some contribution; they at least pay tax. Most of those who were dodging the tax system pay something in the province of Saskatchewan today, and they never did before. So it's designed in the spirit of reform to get people who didn't use to pay tax, and now they will pay some.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Premier. Can you name one, just one major loophole which was previously available but which is not now available, except dividend tax credits and political tax credits?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Are you able to name any loophole of the hundreds — of the hundreds identified by Nielsen — that is not available on calculation of the tax, of the flat tax, except the two I have mentioned, political tax credits and dividend tax credits?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I've said . . . And the hon. member has just indicated two that we have included, so that those people will pay some tax. But he and I both know, and I'm sure we agree, the intent is to get people who are in very high income brackets to pay some tax. And I'm sure he agrees with that. Now I'm dealing with the federal form . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, maybe he doesn't agree with it. You know as well as I do that in the province, unless we go to a provincial-wide tax system alone, we have to deal with the federal tax system. I've asked them to reform it, and I've encouraged them to reform it. We were the first people in Canada to initiate this. And we have got people paying tax that didn't use to pay before. And that's generally in the right direction, and I believe that we should continue in that direction.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — You say that you wish the tax system to be fairer. You know that the federal budget provided that the 5 per cent surcharge on high incomes would be eliminated, and a 3 per cent surcharge would be imposed on everyone right down to an income of \$15,000. Did you publicly protest that budget on the grounds that it went against your principles?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I have suggested in person, and I've suggested in conversation and suggested in letter and talked to the Minister of Finance with respect to the changes regarding tax reform. We have been moving in the right direction in order to get high-income people to pay their fair share, and we're going to continue to do that, so that they don't take advantage of loopholes. We have removed some loopholes in the province of Saskatchewan, and I think you concur — I believe you do — that that's a good idea. Now we're going to continue to do that, to remove more loopholes so that the high-income people pay their fair share, and at the same time we are going to protect families against the sales tax. Because even if they're poor, they have to pay that 20 per cent interest rate, or they've got to pay the sales tax on this, and the sales tax on that. You never did that, and that's where you and I differ. We're going back to protecting low-income families where it really matters. They have no out. They had to pay interest, and they had to pay sales tax, and we've made changes there, and changes people appreciate.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Sveinsson:** — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to momentarily interrupt this battle between two socialist giants here in our Assembly. I would like to indicate to you that Mr. Gary Filmon, the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in Manitoba . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. The member is making a statement rather than asking a question. If you have a question, I'll take the question.

**Mr. Sveinsson:** — It wasn't a statement. It was a preamble to a question. Basically, Mr. Speaker, there isn't any difference between this opposition and that government. And the document presented in this House yesterday, and

tabled, certainly proves that.

One thing the throne speech failed to mention is the U.S. farm Bill which is going to have a disastrous effect on Saskatchewan in the coming years. I want to suggest, sir, that a . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. The member is making suggestions, but he is not asking a question. If you have a question, get directly to it; otherwise, we'll move on.

**Mr. Sveinson:** — I certainly have a question. But with respect again to my preamble, I've heard it here for the last . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. I'll take the next question.

#### Nielsen Task Force Report on Agriculture

**Mr. Engel:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture, and it has to do with the Nielsen task force report. Are you aware of the recommendations that this multi-billion-dollar, big-business operation made with respect to agriculture?

Does your government oppose the report's major recommendations with respect to agriculture: section number one, the 20 per cent that they recommend for crop insurance premiums; an end to the farm fuel tax rebates; the introduction of variable freight rates for grain movement; the cancellation of grain cash advances; and a change in the system of taxing farmers, which will force them to pay on grain in their bin rather than after they sell it?

Do you oppose these recommendations? And if you do, what action have you taken to help Saskatchewan farmers lobby Ottawa against this disastrous change in agriculture?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I obviously support the cash advance system, because in the province of Saskatchewan under our administration we have initiated brand-new cash advance systems for the livestock industry. So I have initiated brand-new cash advances because I believe that they're good for farmers. So I will endorse cash advance. I think it's a good idea in the elevator system, and I believe that it's a good idea in livestock.

With respect to crop insurance, Mr. Speaker, we are now working to put together an improved crop insurance mechanism, improved stabilization. We've now enjoined the national tripartite hog stabilization program, and I believe it's a good system for Canada. We are beefing up the crop insurance program and, in addition, working with the federal government, because we get it on the table at the first ministers' conference, a brand-new disaster mechanism for agriculture, particularly in western Canada. In co-operation with the Prime Minister we said yes, I think we can design one here; and John Wise says they can design one.

So I'm in favour of crop insurance; I'm in favour of improving it. I'm in favour of stabilization. I obviously favour cash advances, and I'm going to be encouraging

every administration to stick with cash advances. So the kinds of things that we have done here . . . For example, 6 per cent interest rate — I encouraged the federal government to move for 6 per cent interest rates and they did. They brought in 6 per cent and the Farm Credit Corporation. I said that you should reduce the taxation on farm fuel. They have taken our lead in several regards. Where they don't take our lead, then I will differ from them. Where they follow the kinds of things that we're doing here in the province, then I will give them a bouquet.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Engel:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't believe what I heard. Here's the Minister of Agriculture standing up and supporting the Nielsen task force report, is what you're saying. They said they're going to increase the premiums by 20 per cent — 20 per cent increase in the premiums. Are you going to make the crop insurance unaffordable? They're going to end the farm fuel tax rebates. They're going to introduce variable freight rates, which you must agree with because you never mentioned. They're going to cancel the cash advances, if you agree with it or not.

Are you going to lobby with farm groups to oppose this Nielsen task force report?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I can say unequivocally, I will lobby hard for the province of Saskatchewan so that the federal government will do the kinds of things that we are doing here.

**Mr. Engel:** — You're avoiding the question, Mr. Premier. The question was: are you going to get together with Saskatchewan farm groups and lobby Ottawa to say that that task force report needs to be torn up, that we can't buy it? Are you going to stand up for farmers, or are you going to let them implement these five or six changes that will put every farmer out of business, including the successful ones?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, yes, I will be promoting the kinds of programs that I feel are important to Saskatchewan farmers; and yes, I will be lobbying the federal government to do the kinds of things that we do and have done here in the province of Saskatchewan. I'll remind you — I'll remind the member opposite — that I lobbied the federal government personally in Prince Albert to take the capital gains tax off farm land and they did it for the first time in history, right here in the province of Saskatchewan. You opposed that. You didn't like it. But I'll tell you: when we asked for help in drought, when we asked for help in flooding, when we asked to have the capital gains tax removed for the province of Saskatchewan, we got it here in Saskatchewan. We're going to continue to lobby for the kinds of things that are important here.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### Water treatment plant for Prince Albert

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs and it deals with a proposed

water treatment plant for the city of Prince Albert.

In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the throne speech had almost nothing to say about the problems that urban municipalities face, other than that government will talk politely to the federal government about some help — in view of the fact that in the city of Prince Albert, the city will soon not be able to process enough water that is pure to meet all of its needs, and a new water treatment plant is required if the city is to expand and meet those needs, can the minister please advise this Assembly whether or not his government has decided to contribute to the construction of this important plant.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from the member opposite. Prince Albert has certainly been high on the priority lists of concerns for this particular administration. I would remind the members of the Assembly that we have funded the construction of a very large technical school in that city which is substantially going to assist and benefit the people of that particular area.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — As it relates, Mr. Speaker . . . As it relates . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, I think I'll sit down until the members opposite are quiet.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please!

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, we will continue to address infrastructure needs as they arise. As the throne speech indicated yesterday, we will be attempting to negotiate with the federal government a long-term pattern of funding to enhance and to maintain the important infrastructure that we do have here in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The problems that exist now and that have existed for some time . . . A technical school four years late is not going to answer the pressing need of the water problem in the city of Prince Albert, and the Minister of Urban Affairs knows that. The problem is now and so I ask him: when does the minister expect that his government will finally make a decision on this important Prince Albert project so that the city will have a good quality and adequate quantity of water in the future without delay?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, I understand the project is under construction, but I want to talk about four years late. They had 11 years to fix up the infrastructure to provide good water to the city of Regina. And did they do anything? Not one thing, Mr. Speaker. Not one thing. How many years did they have to negotiate an oil upgrader for the city of Regina or to put a technical school up in Prince Albert or to help fund an arena for the city of Saskatoon? They had more than four years . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### Operation of Nipawin Dam

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. It deals with the Nipawin dam and the fact that according to press reports it is operating at less than 40 per cent capacity because of a design and operational flaw, and I ask the minister: can you tell us how much this lost operation is costing the Government of Saskatchewan, the power corporation, and the power users of Saskatchewan; and can you outline what steps have been taken to make the non-Canadian designer and supplier of this equipment meet commitments; and are there appropriate provisions to recover any losses because of the reported design error?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, there are several questions put by the hon. member. The first one is cost to power and to people of Saskatchewan and obviously I don't know that precisely and I'll take notice of that question.

As it relates to recovery of those costs from the offshore designer and manufacturer, I fully expect that there is a mechanism in place to recover those costs, Mr. Speaker, as I expect that when the purchase was made, or the order placed by power when the previous administration was in office, that those particular things were taken care of.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister give us any indication of when it is expected that the power plant will work at something approaching 100 per cent capacity, and when the design faults — apparently serious in nature — will be fixed, so that the plant works?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Yes. Again, I'll take notice and I'll check with the engineers who are responsible for those kinds of things. I understand that there is a design flaw. It's something to do with hydraulic cavitation, and I really don't know what that is. So I'll find the folks that do and I'll let you know as soon as I find out.

#### Crop Insurance Changes

**Mr. Engel:** — Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Minister of Agriculture. Last summer you came down to my constituency with your cabinet — to Assiniboia, in fact — and you announced some changes to the crop insurance that have caused massive confusion amongst farmers, and amongst your crop insurance agents, amongst your people that were doing adjustment.

Has some of that confusion cleared up? And a quick question constituents are asking me right across southern Saskatchewan: when are you going to pay out the 5-bushel coverage you promised them?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker. We have made significant changes to crop insurance, in many cases suggested by your constituents and people in the Assiniboia area. The salvage operation, as it was called, in terms of allowing people to go cut their crop and to use it for their own feed or sell it to somebody else as feed and leave a strip to be measured later, was very well received.

I don't know if . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I know, Mr. Speaker. When we let people cut their crop, because they

knew it was going to burn anyway, and salvage the crop that was there — something that the NDP never even thought of — but if we allowed the people to salvage the crop, use it for feed, it made millions and tens of millions of dollars all across southern Saskatchewan, and certainly in your riding it made a great deal ... (inaudible interjection) ... We did that; it's already done. With respect to that salvage operation, I believe, and people from across southern Saskatchewan believe, it's a good idea and it should be maintained.

With respect to additional payments, the crop insurance payments — as you know, we've processed about 90,000 applications, which is the largest ever in the history of Saskatchewan, and there was a later harvest, so it wasn't something that we had applications that came in in early fall. It was late right through till practically Christmas time. We are still processing those and they're going out to farmers as quickly as we can put the information together.

**Mr. Engel:** — I'm more than flabbergasted by your announcements and your answers today, Mr. Minister of Agriculture. The massive confusion you caused amongst farmers on the 5-bushel deductible has got to be the biggest booboo of any government in history. And the farmers everywhere are saying, if you would have stayed with that, they wouldn't even have bought crop insurance. You've just about ruined the program. You've just about ruined it.

The question they're now asking is: those that harvested their crop that was adjusted at less than 5 bushels an acre, when are they going to get their 20 bucks? When are they going to get their money?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, people from across Saskatchewan asked us to provide changes to crop insurance to get more money in their pockets. The people in Assiniboia came to me and said, it isn't worth running your combine over 1.9 bushels, and you know that. I mean you've probably tried it. I've tried it and it's very difficult, and it just doesn't pay. And they said, would you please allow us, one, to go cut the crop, and two, raise that limit to make it worthwhile to go after the grain. So you're asking: do you think I should ... Well I'm going to make those payments. Of course we're going to make those payments. We'll make them as quickly as we can, quickly as we can.

What I would like to know from you is if you think it's a good idea that 5 bushels should be taken back to 1.9. If that's your recommendation, then I'd look at it. Because a lot of farmers would like to see it back to 1.9, but there's many would like to see it at 5. Now it's a question of where it's most fair to farmers who have to take their combine over a great deal of land that isn't producing anything and still have fair crop insurance.

So the suggestions that come back are those that were implemented by our administration. We've paid out \$370 million in crop insurance, and we're going to be out millions and millions more. And we are going to add more payments to that, which is for the first time in the history of this province you're going to see money coming out of Saskatchewan right into the pockets of

farmers linked to crop insurance.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## MESSAGE FROM THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

### Change in Membership of Board of Internal Economy

**Mr. Speaker:** — I have a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, a letter dated March 10, pursuant to section 68.7 of The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act:

I hereby inform the Assembly of the following change in membership of the Board of Internal Economy effective February 13, 1986, placing Mr. Keith Parker, MLA, on the board in place of the Hon. Myles Morin.

(Signed) F.W. Johnson, Lieutenant Governor.

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Mr. Speaker:** — I also lay on the Table a report from the Chief Electoral Officer:

This is to certify that by reason of the resignation of Russ Sutor, the elected member for the constituency of Regina North East, and by virtue of Writ of Election dated October 26, 1985, addressed to Barbara Hodgson, Returning Officer for Regina North East, for an election on November 25th, 1985. I am in receipt of the Return in accordance with Section 143 of The Election Act, which declares Ed Tchorzewski elected for Regina North East.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## CONDOLENCES

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, before Orders of the Day, and by leave of the Assembly, I would like to move, and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition:

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, and premier of this province, and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency and the province, and Canada.

**Thomas Clement Douglas**, who died in Ottawa on February 24, 1986 was a member of this Legislative Assembly, representing the constituency of Weyburn from 1944 to 1961.

Born October 20, 1904, at Falkirk, Scotland, Mr. Douglas emigrated to Canada with his family when he was six years old. They settled in Winnipeg in 1919.

Mr. Douglas left school at the age of 14, becoming a printer's apprentice. In 1924, after several active years in church work, he entered the ministry at Brandon College where he received a B.A. degree in theology. He earned an M.A. degree from McMaster University, and undertook postgraduate work at the University of

Chicago. An honorary Doctor of Laws degree was conferred upon him by the University of Regina in 1978.

After marrying Irma Dempsey in 1930, Tommy Douglas and his new wife moved to Weyburn where, from 1935 to 1944, he represented the federal riding of Weyburn as a member of parliament.

After resigning his seat in Ottawa in 1944, he was elected to this legislature in the same year, becoming premier of the province, president of Executive Council, and minister of Public Health.

In 1949 Premier Douglas relinquished the Health portfolio and became minister of Co-operation and Co-operative Development. He resigned his seat in this legislature to assume the federal leadership of the New Democratic Party.

Tommy Douglas was re-elected in the House of Commons in a by-election in 1962 in the British Columbia constituency of Burnaby-Coquitlam, a seat he held until 1968. From 1969 to 1979 he represented in the same province, Nanaimo-Cowichan-the-Islands. He did not seek re-election in 1979.

Tommy Douglas's commitment was always evident. He served as a captain of the reserve army for the second battalion of the South Saskatchewan Regiment, vice-chairman of the Canadian branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, president of the Douglas-Coldwell Foundation, and a member of the Sons of Scotland.

His love of sports was evident in his active participation in wrestling, swimming, dancing, shooting, boxing, golfing, and tennis. His interest in debating, dramatics, and oratory produced in him a skill he would use extensively and effectively throughout this life.

For me, Mr. Speaker, the memory I have of Mr. Douglas is of a warm and caring and jovial individual. What I remember is an old-style politician who would sit at the kitchen table of farm families all over the province. He would listen and discuss the things that were meaningful to the people. He spoke the language, he understood, and he could bring all the information together and make it meaningful on a larger scale. He believed that every citizen should have some part of forming government policy, and he used what he learned. For this he was much admired and loved.

You could listen to him on the radio and think: I know where he got this information; I had a part of it. They used to say at election time that Tommy Douglas did not have to kiss babies; babies kissed him. Yes, he always took time to visit, even with a new premier, and when he shared his experiences and insights, that new premier listened and, believe me, took notes. His wisdom and insights transcended partisan politics; his interest was with the people. Above all else he had an unwavering faith and pride in our province and its people, and the courage and conviction to build a future for everybody.

He had the vision that brought good to both social and economic foundations in our society. Whether it was pushing for rural electrification, or promoting irrigation, or development of our natural resources, or introducing a universal medical care system, Tommy Douglas demonstrated time and time again his commitment to those he served, and his belief in the people.

Tommy will be sadly missed by all of us in Saskatchewan, and indeed in Canada. But his wisdom, his humour, and his legacy will live on in our memories and serve as an inspiration to all who would seek to make this province a better place.

Mr. Speaker, premiers and prime ministers and presidents and leaders share something in common, and that's power and responsibility.

In the Premier's office in this legislature there's a plaque dedicated to leaders — guiding leaders — and it's a letter to the rulers of the world from Saint Francis of Assisi, and it says the following:

We, the followers of Saint Francis of Assisi, and your co-workers in struggling for a better society, send greetings and peace in this message.

And I quote (this is to the leaders of the world):

Keep a clear eye towards life's end. Do not forget your purpose and destiny as God's creature. What you are in His sight is what you are and nothing more. Do not let your worldly cares and anxieties or the pressures of the office blot out the divine life within you or the voice of God's spirit guiding you in your great task of leading humanity to wholeness. If you open yourself to God and His plan, printed deeply in your heart, God will open himself to you. Remember that when you leave this earth, you take with you nothing that you have received, fading symbols of honour, trappings of power, but only what you have given, a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.

Embrace the God of all of us and His word wherever it surfaces. Imitate His preference for the poor and the powerless. Enter into His plan of liberating all peoples from everything that oppresses them and obstructs their development as human beings. Do not grow tired of working for peace among all people.

And finally they say:

Help remove unjust social structures and patterns of exploitation. Uphold the rights of dignity of the human person. Foster the creation of society where human life is cherished and where all peoples of the planet can enjoy its gifts, which God created for all, in the spirit of love, justice and equality.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't suppose we'll ever know if Tommy Douglas read this letter from Saint Francis, but in my sincere view he delivered on that message as well as any elected man we've known. Tommy Douglas was truly a great Canadian.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family of Tommy Douglas.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, much has been said about this remarkable man since Tommy Douglas died on February 24th. I propose to address some remarks primarily to his time here in this legislature, although his career, prior to that and subsequent to leaving this legislature in 1961, is itself a remarkable career, encompassing as it does wartime service at the earlier end, and the national leadership of a national political party later on in his life.

But Tommy had a career in this legislature which was perhaps second to none in the history of this province. He was premier of Saskatchewan for over 17 years, longer than any other person, and in this period Saskatchewan was transformed.

In the first three decades after 1905 Saskatchewan was in many ways a frontier province where energies were devoted to overcoming the rigours of a harsh environment. Then soon came the 1930's, and few places in the world suffered more from the combined effects of depression and drought than did Saskatchewan. Roads and schools and hospitals and utilities were either worn out or non-existent, and what was true of public assets was almost equally true of private assets. Wartime offered little opportunity to start building and rebuilding during those years from 1939 to 1945.

So that in 1944, when Tommy Douglas became premier of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan was one of the poorest places in North America, measured by what was, as opposed to what might be. In these circumstances Tommy made the province the social laboratory of Canada and North America.

Tommy was inspired and inspiring. Because he had confidence in people, he gave them confidence, confidence that they could progress towards the new Jerusalem of which he so often spoke.

I want now to just itemize a number of the accomplishments during the Douglas era. In health there was free treatment of cancer, the air ambulance service, a totally transformed mental health service — and I still find myself going around elsewhere in the world and finding people who talk about the mental health service.

A year ago I ran into some people in Antigua and St. Kitts, Mr. Speaker, who were talking about the mental health service. They had come from the New York State Mental Health Service where they had worked with people who had once been in Saskatchewan and then went to New York. There were the construction of many new hospitals. There was a hospital insurance, a medical care plan in the Swift Current health region, and eventually legislation for the province-wide plan. Each of these were eventually adopted by other provinces — that is the medical plan and the hospital plan — to give Canada perhaps the most successful health insurance plan in the world — certainly one of them.

(1445)

Turning to the field of insurance, comprehensive automobile insurance was introduced, and it served Saskatchewan people in an outstanding way. Moves in other insurance fields dramatically lowered premiums for Saskatchewan citizens, and during the late 40s and early 50s you could find premium books around for board companies which quoted rates for western Canada and said at the bottom: for Saskatchewan, deduct 20 per cent, and that was because SGI was in operation.

Turning to rural life, I've heard people describe rural electrification as the greatest boon to rural life in the last 50 years. Farm women love the introduction of rural electrification. The basic utilities of electric power, natural gas, and telephones were under great pressure during this period and were greatly improved. For a period under the Douglas administration, electric consumption was increasing at the rate of 20 per cent per annum, compounded, and I remember the problems of attempting to double the size of the generating capacity every four years. Saskatchewan became the only province to distribute natural gas as a publicly-owned utility.

Turning to farm protection, a great range of laws was enacted to help farmers keep their land. Many of them are still part of the law of Saskatchewan — The Farm Security Act, The Land Contracts (Actions) Act, The Limitation of Civil Rights Act, and others.

I mentioned the North, and Indian people. Under the Douglas government roads were built to the North. It's hard for us to realize that in 1945 there was no road from Prince Albert to La Ronge, and no road to Buffalo Narrows. Those were isolated areas, accessible only by very difficult land transportation in the winter, or by air.

During this period, great steps, important steps were taken to improve the economic base of Northerners. The fishing, trapping, and forestry were strengthened by rigorous conservation measures, and some people who lived through those eras will know what happened. The beaver population was rehabilitated, the forest was rehabilitated, and generally, the economic base was broadened.

The first conference of Treaty Indian leaders, basically from southern Saskatchewan, was convened by Douglas, which led to the formation of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, now the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, and the maturity and depth of leadership of the FSIN is due, in no small measure, to this early start they got in the 1940s.

I turn now to veterans. The Douglas government had particularly imaginative programs for helping veterans of World War II get started in civilian life. One of the most imaginative ones, perhaps, was a couple of government organizations which undertook to dismantle the airports that were strewn around this province and built for wartime use. And the assets of those corporations were distributed among many, many smaller communities of Saskatchewan. For many years one could see emergency



housing made of H-huts. And you can still see some hangars about, serving a useful purpose.

I mentioned trade unions. Saskatchewan was the first province to have comprehensive trade union legislation, and the first province to give public servants the right to organize, and the right to withdraw their services as part of the right to organize. A professional public service based upon merit was established which, I think it is fair to say, became the envy of provincial public services in Canada.

On the national and international sphere, Douglas was a leader in the discussions which resulted in federal-provincial tax-sharing, with equalization for poorer provinces, that is now so much a part of Canada's governmental structure — which it certainly wasn't up until the late '40s or early '50s. It is now included in the 1982 constitution.

Internationally, Douglas was a steadfast supporter of the United Nations and peace by negotiation. He was neither a pacifist nor a sabre rattler, and he leaned to negotiation as the way to deal with international disputes.

In this House he was probably the finest debater that the House has seen. A fine voice, a great flow of language, a copious knowledge of the King James version of the Bible and of the Protestant hymns, a substantial knowledge of poetry — of Burns, but of many others — allowed him to sparkle his oratory with apt quotations.

He had a bottomless fund of jokes, as everybody knows who has heard him. He used many of them in this House and outside the House. He all but invented a form of political public speaking which not many people have been able to copy — that's the political parable, the long story which contains an analogy to, perhaps, some part of the economic system. His cream separator analogy for the economic system is perhaps as well known as any; perhaps the mouse-land one. There a number which he developed and which served to explain complicated matters to ordinary citizens.

In government, as a premier, as an administrator, he was razor-sharp, being able to dissect a balance sheet within a minute or two. And I've seen him do it, and I've seen him question me on it and go to the heart of the balance sheet almost immediately. He demanded and got top-level performance from the people who worked around him. He was quite capable of being demanding and hard-driving — sometimes unreasonably so, perhaps, seen from the other side of the fence — because he certainly demanded performance. But he commanded a respect by all, and an affection by most, that made him a pleasure to work with, and a very special person.

There are not many Tommy Douglasses in this legislature, not many in any other legislature. I'm proud to have served as a public servant under his government. I'm proud to have served in this legislature as a colleague of his. I'm proud to have served in his cabinet, proud to have known this pugnacious premier who fought the good fight with all his might for the things in which he believed.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Speaker, I too wish to join in

this motion of condolence. As has been pointed out, not only was Mr. Douglas a former premier of the province of Saskatchewan but as MP or as MLA represented Weyburn and area for nearly two and one-half decades. And in Weyburn and area I would say, much as the death has left the usual mark of sorrow, it has also rekindled many fond stories and memories and the recollections of these stories in Weyburn, and that is probably as Mr. Douglas would have liked it.

As history has recorded, and as we have heard today, Mr. Douglas pioneered many social and economic programs. Certainly the Leader of the Opposition made reference to much of the farm security legislation that was in place in this House until the last year or two. Forty years later when much of it was researched in great detail because of the condition we found ourselves in, the foundations for it were laid by Mr. Douglas and his government.

(1500)

What history has maybe never recorded to the same degree was the uncanny ability that Mr. Douglas had to relate to the individual, whether that individual was the farmer, the farm wife, the business man, or the worker. He had a touch that crossed all barriers, age and otherwise. His wit and oratorical skills were the tools of his trade. He was always ready with the anecdote that put the event, the issue, the concept, in a perspective that all could understand, and certainly the cream separator story was one that he was well-known for and, in fact, as I recall in my maiden speech in this House, one that I related perhaps with a little different twist, but certainly it provided for me a model of an element of communication that's extremely useful for someone in public life. In fact I think one could say that Mr. Douglas was the epitome of the good communicator and probably had that ability to utilize — the medium I think being probably radio — as to today one might deal with television.

I suspect that to many people in political life across Canada today, and perhaps even some in this legislature, the undertaking to enter into and pursue the field of politics was because of Mr. Douglas himself, and the impression he left on others. I would suggest that he has provided, for many, a Saskatchewan model of a grass-roots politician.

My last direct contact with Mr. Douglas was in fact my very first official act as the newly elected MLA for Weyburn in the spring of 1982. He and I were at the head table when the Weyburn Youngfellows' Club, which is a service and fellowship club not unlike Lions and Kinsmen — that kind of thing — one that Mr. Douglas related well to; they were celebrating their 75th birthday. I was there to bring greetings, and Mr. Douglas was there to be guest speaker because of his involvement with that club many years ago.

Even at this time in his life, the powerful orator that he was shone through. But what stood out probably even more so in the minds of many there and in many of the members of that club, past and present, was not so much what he said that night, but in fact that he cared enough to come to their 75th anniversary back in Weyburn, Saskatchewan. He cared enough, and that was the measure of this man

— care and compassion and understanding of his fellow man — his trade marks.

So I too, Mr. Speaker, along with my colleagues here in the legislature, would like to pass along my sympathies to the members of the family and to his friends who will sadly miss him, whether they be in Weyburn, the province of Saskatchewan, or elsewhere in the world.

**Mr. Engel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am pleased to rise today in this Assembly to speak on this condolence motion on the life of a great man that passed away on February 24th.

I can't do justice today, Mr. Speaker, to portray to you and to his family the deep emotion I feel towards this man and what he has taught us in the legacy he has left all of the people of not only Saskatchewan but the entire nation.

I'd like to express my own gratitude and the gratitude of that of my constituents from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg for his service and his accomplishments that he has rendered in his lifetime.

As a young man who had witnessed and experienced the hardships of the 20s and the 30s, Tommy's dedication to his church . . . and had a noble calling that kept him in close touch with the families and working people and the farmers that were suffering in those days.

This calling as a minister enabled him to use his extraordinary speaking skills. He later said that he decided to enter the political life because preaching moral and spiritual values from the pulpit was not enough. And I think today we realize that same thing holds true — Tommy didn't have two sermons, Mr. Speaker — he always practised what he preached. And I'm sure that those that heard him on a Sunday morning or on an election campaign trail heard the same message. Whether it was as a preacher from his pulpit, or as a tireless CCF member of parliament, or as a courageous and successful premier, and a national leader, Tommy always remained true to his fundamental moral principles and his vision of a better future.

He brought a high moral level to public life in Saskatchewan. The virtues that this man lived and practised and conveyed through his life were guiding principles that changed our whole society — the principles of sharing, the principles of compassion and tolerance and justice for all.

His vision of a better future extended beyond our provincial borders and beyond Canada. I think that one of the times that I got to know Tommy Douglas best was when we were in the same hall; in fact his room was right next to mine, the one that Joyce and I shared in the Senator Hotel in Washington when I had the privilege of going to a presidential prayer breakfast. Watching Tommy at that function — it was just prior to Watergate — there's a principle about him that made an impact on me that I will never forget, and that was that he wouldn't criticize other people. He never got involved in pointing fingers at a one-to-one level. In spite of a time

when Richard Nixon slapped his hand on his chest and said that because I have peace in my own heart I could make peace in China — just weeks later Watergate broke out. In spite of that kind of attitude, Tommy had nothing bad to say about even Richard Nixon in those words.

He reminded us that we would do well to spend more money helping feed the underprivileged people of the world. This, in the long run, would do more to contribute towards peace than probably any other single issue would do. And so, not only Saskatchewan and Canada, but, I believe, a large part of the world was better off because of the life that Tommy lived amongst us.

The passing of this great Canadian provides an opportunity for all of us today to rededicate ourselves to carry out the work he started, each in our own way, to make that future truly a better and brighter future, and a fairer future for all. Thank you.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my condolences, and those of my constituents from Quill Lakes, on the passing of what I consider a truly great former member of this legislature and premier of this province, and a truly great Canadian, Tommy Douglas.

I want to relate that I met Tommy Douglas on a number of occasions. I recall when I was still in high school in Humboldt when he was premier at that time, and I believe that Mr. Tucker was the official leader of the opposition of the Liberal party. Great debates — they went at each other very strenuously during those days in politics. I can remember a group of us from high school going down to the town hall and taking in the speech, and the hall was packed to hear Tommy Douglas. We used to go, and he built a great interest in young people who went to hear him.

On another occasion I recall — I think it was in 1978 to be exact — Mr. Douglas was kind enough to come to Saskatchewan, and I recall him joining me in the campaign down at Lanigan, and he spent the day. We had a noon luncheon for business people and a number of other supporters and whoever wished to come. We had a nice turn-out at the small legion hall there, and I remember Tommy was there, and the intense appreciation of people that he had. I recall we had a luncheon, and he wouldn't sit down to eat until he had shaken hands with every individual in the room.

And I recall a request that was made to him, if he would go to the hospital — that some lady was very ill who was a great admirer of his — and how he didn't even resist; it was nothing to him to go and see that lady who was in hospital, who wanted to see him. Then the principal of the elementary school took him in to see a group of young students, and the way in which he could communicate with the young people was really quite remarkable.

I guess there are so many different accomplishments that one could talk about in respect to Mr. Douglas and the way in which he dedicated his life to public service, and I suppose all of us have been touched. But I think I'd like to touch on the work and his contribution in health achievements that are known to all of us.

Many of you here will know that as a boy he experienced at first hand the crisis of a health problem within the family — indeed himself. And obviously he witnessed countless other families throughout Saskatchewan and Canada experiencing the anxiety of failing health and hospitalization, and he was determined to avoid the crisis that would confront people as a result of sickness. And as the premier of Saskatchewan, he was able to address that problem, and in Tommy's characteristic way he acted with boldness, courage, and determination to provide basic hospitalization insurance to all Saskatchewan people. And it was his courage and determination, and that of Woodrow Lloyd and other members of his cabinet, that brought medicare to Saskatchewan as well.

And I want to say that as we talk about the achievements and the greatness of Tommy Douglas, I think one of the great achievements and characteristics of his life is that, while he racked up all these achievements, there was tremendous opposition from many segments of society. I recall in medicare how people across this province mounted an attack against the principle of universal medicare. And I think of all the achievements, and how many people now take for granted and like to, sort of, tie their fortunes on to some of the achievements and the hard fights that he had in developing those achievements.

And not only to Saskatchewan did he give medicare and hospitalization, but because of his founding it here in Saskatchewan, inevitably to all of Canada. And that is why we are all so proud to remember Tommy Douglas as the true father of medicare.

But his achievements extend to so many other areas as well — to our school system which he was determined to make the best in North America, and certainly the education system excelled under his administration. He gave a fair deal to the teachers, a future of full opportunity to Saskatchewan's young men and women.

(1515)

I say to you that Tommy was a great Canadian, but he was always ready to stand up for Saskatchewan. He saw the bountiful riches of our natural resources could and should be used for social and economic development of our province and its people.

And perhaps the greatest strengths that Tommy relied on were his fundamental Christian moral values and his firm faith in young people. He worked for them. He relied on them. He was determined that they might have the fullest opportunities to make their world and ours a better, fairer world for all, within Saskatchewan and beyond. Tommy especially enjoyed being with young people, and he often challenged them with what may be called his own golden rule: "Let us measure ourselves and our lives not by what we get, but by what we give." By that standard few have ever given so much to so many as Tommy Douglas. He was loved, he will be missed, and his work will continue. And I am certainly proud to have been associated with a movement which has achieved so much, and with a leader with such outstanding leadership qualities.

**Mr. Lusney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I rise today to speak on this condolence motion of the passing of Tommy Douglas, I know I rise and speak on behalf of all the people of Pelly constituency. Tommy was a great orator. He was a great public figure, a man of warmth and humour, and a truly great CCF premier of the province of Saskatchewan for some 17 years.

Tommy was a great Canadian. to farm families and rural communities during the Douglas years there was rapid change, a positive transformation on rural life, for Tommy knew the importance of rural communities and the rural families that comprised them. He knew the importance of rural electrification, the larger school units, and a vastly improved rural highway system, and he knew the Saskatchewan farmers were among the most productive in the world. And Tommy was determined to help them stay that way. He was proud of Saskatchewan and he stood up for Saskatchewan, and we, in turn, were all proud of Tommy.

In my constituency, Mr. Speaker, there are many who knew him personally, and they loved Tommy. I am proud to have had the opportunity to know Tommy and to have spent some time talking to him, to have listened to the story of how he started in politics and what he did before he got into politics. It gave me a better understanding of the kind of man that Tommy was. He was a man that had a lot of understanding. He was considerate and he was a very compassionate type of person.

Mr. Speaker, there are many others — young people, mostly — who never knew Tommy personally, but they know how his courage, his dedication, his moral principles, and his vision touched and changed their lives. Tommy will be missed by both young and old. And he will be missed because of the kind of man he was, and all the things he believed in, and all that he did for every one of us in this province.

They know that Tommy's passing leaves it up to us, to each one of us, to carry on the work that he began. And I know we will all miss Tommy. But we know also that what he believed in has to be carried on and has to be done, and many people will never forget Tommy because of that.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with other members in speaking to this condolence motion which we are speaking to today on the passing of one T.C. Douglas, known to Saskatchewan residents, as other have referred to, as Tommy.

Tommy, of course, was an individual, as others again have mentioned, who was able to speak directly to people by going out and meeting them. I suppose the interesting thing in politics today is the fact that, in getting our message out, we have resorted — maybe because we have to — to 15-second clips and trying to affect thousands of people on the spur of the moment. It seems to me that the type of politics and the type of movement that T.C. Douglas was involved in was quite different — travelling thousands of miles by old jalopy through mud holes and rain and wind and storms to get to see people and to attend meetings.

And I know that the people of the province from all political backgrounds will miss him a great deal. I think this was noted most currently to me when an old friend of mine, a Liberal friend, Pete Lewans from Shaunavon, came to me, a couple of days after Tommy passed away, in the post office, and wanted to pass on to the party and to others who knew Tommy better than he how much he had appreciated working with him as reeve of the R.M., and how much he respected him even though he didn't agree with him, but how much he respected the work that he had done and his commitment to a cause.

I say as well that Tommy had a very interesting view of politics and the movement towards a more just and more fair society. And I can remember in 1982 after the election, some of us were talking with him at a function. And he was saying, the progress towards a more just society is not a continuous climb. He said oftentimes there will be two steps forward, one step back, and three steps forward. And I think he taught his people never to become discouraged or despondent because of a setback or because of a momentary lull in the progress towards a more even distribution of wealth or a more just society.

And I think I would just like to end there by saying that we in Saskatchewan are better off, have a better province, because we knew Tommy and because Tommy was premier of this province. And I just want to join with others in extending heartfelt sympathy from the people of the Shaunavon constituency to Tommy's family.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to, on behalf of my constituents in Regina North East, join with all of my colleagues in this House in extending condolences to the family of Tommy Douglas.

Tommy Douglas has received many tributes from thousands of Canadians since his passing, and no one in my memory is more deserving. And some may argue, but I personally believe that this great man achieved more than any public person in the history of Saskatchewan, and indeed in Canada, and because of that he has made our lives better.

Tommy's compassion, his love for his fellow man, and his determination to do all that he could to better the lives of ordinary people gave him the courage to fight the wealthiest and the most powerful groups in society, and individuals in society who would have tried, and did try, to preserve their privileged place. And it might have been easier to back off; it might have been easier to leave things as they were; but he did not, and he fought on. And as a result, his influence has been felt by every Canadian, wherever he or she lives, from east to west and north to south.

I remember as a young boy listening to the radio to the debates that came out of this Assembly — that's something we did in our family very regularly — and I remember thinking about this tower of a man that I would hope to meet some day. And then I had the opportunity meet him, because my father took me to a public meeting where Tommy was speaking. And although I realized then that, physically, he was not a tower of a man, in my mind he always remained a tower of a man because of who he was and what he did.

Tommy Douglas sought no rewards and he sought no honours. He simply wanted to be a part of making this province, this country, and this world, a better place in which to live for human beings, and for that he will always be remembered. And I'm proud to have been able to know Tommy Douglas because I learned from him; I learned from him that things are not made of the things we wish — they are made of the things we do.

I'm proud to be able to stand here today and join all the members of this Assembly in extending condolences to the family of Tommy Douglas and expressing gratitude for all that he did for all of us.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to add my condolences on behalf of myself and my constituents, Mr. Speaker. As the leader, Mr. Blakeney, has indicated, Tommy Douglas was a man who had a vision in northern Saskatchewan. And as I go through the North — and I talked to many of my constituents, especially senior constituents, after the passing of Tommy Douglas — they all indicate to me what he really meant to them.

Mr. Blakeney spoke of the roads that Tommy Douglas started and had a vision in de-isolating northern Saskatchewan, and that has taken place. He built many new schools, and he actually was the architect of starting a school system in communities such as La Loche and the far northern community of Camsell Portage

He also started the health care system that we have in northern Saskatchewan, and improved on that. He was a strong promoter of the co-ops in northern Saskatchewan.

I can remember growing up in Big River and my father talking to me about Tommy Douglas. At that time I remember standing on a dock when they were throwing the beavers in the lake, when the country was dead of beavers, and I remember the half-ton truck with the resource officer in it pulling up and putting these beavers out on the dock. As a young boy, with my father, I had an opportunity to grab one of those animals by the tail and throw it into the lake. Many years later we see the results of that program.

I can remember one evening riding on an aircraft between Prince Albert and Saskatoon with Clyne Harradence. It was a dark evening and Clyne Harradence and I looked out over the countryside from up in the air. And Mr. Harradence remarked to me — he said, "Tommy really meant what he said when he said he was going to light up Saskatchewan." And I think that says just what type of an individual he was. He got credits from all parts and all parties in the province.

I walked into one of my constituent's home in Beauval, a Mrs. Mary Millbourne, the day after Tommy died, and one of the first things she said to me when she heard of Tommy's passing, was that she sat down and cried. And I think that was a reaction that was probably in many households across Saskatchewan and across Canada.

While the passing of Tommy Douglas will be sadly missed, I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that he will never

be forgotten.

(1530)

**Mr. Yew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to join members of this Assembly, as well as the people of this province, in extending condolences to family of the late T.C. Douglas.

I had personal opportunity to shake hands with T.C. Douglas in '83 at a convention, at which time I felt a very personal attachment to the man. In fact it was such a feeling of personal affection that I had that I went out of my way to try to purchase a memento of this meeting with the late T.C. Douglas, and that memento is with me today — a pin that I wear on my necktie that has the T.C. Douglas's picture on it. I'm honoured to wear it today, and I will treasure it.

I want to say as well . . . extend some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition when he mentioned about Tommy's involvement with the native people, with the North, and in particular with native people. I meet with a great deal of native people because the North is predominantly native. I want to say this to the members of this Assembly, that when I joined the legislature in 1982, there were a good number of native people in the North that asked me, from time to time, do you get a chance to sit and talk with T.C. Douglas? And I'd look at them and I'd wonder, you know, has his politics or has politics, or, you know, somehow or other there was this gap between the North and the South. But with Tommy I don't think there was any gap between him and his commitments and his associations.

I join with all members of this Assembly and people of this province in extending condolences and my sincere sympathies, as well, for the passing of this very honourable person. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition:

That the resolution just passed, together with the transcript of oral tributes to the memory of the deceased member, be communicated to the bereaved family on behalf of the Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** — The Leader of the Opposition is not in his chair at the moment. Could we have a different seconder? Motion moved by the Premier, seconded by the member for Quill Lakes. The Premier has asked for leave. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Quill Lakes, and with leave of the Assembly:

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of the Legislative

Assembly of Saskatchewan, and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and this province.

**Joseph Jeffrey Charlebois**, who died on February 25th, 1986, was a member of this legislature for the constituency of Saskatoon City Park-University from 1967 to 1971. He was born in Saskatoon in 1909. Jeffrey Charlebois was educated at Victoria School, Saskatoon; St. Louis College in Victoria, British Columbia; and St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, California. He operated a family roofing business in Saskatoon for many years. He was an alderman on the Saskatoon City Council from 1965 to '66, a member of the Saskatoon Catholic School Board from 1941 to '46, president of the first Canada Winter Games which were held in Saskatoon in 1971, president of the Saskatoon Board of Trade in 1960, and a member of various service clubs and other community organizations.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved families.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my word to those of the Premier with respect to the passing of Jeff Charlebois.

As the motion indicates, he had a very distinguished career in the service of the citizens of Saskatoon in many capacities: in the school boards and councils, in business organizations, in church organizations, and in general community organizations of the nature of the western Canada Winter Games.

I served in the legislature with him for four years, from 1967 to 1971. He represented a point of view which was not mine. He brought to the legislature views from a small-business perspective — not the perspective of all small-business people, but the perspective of some small-business people.

He, particularly in the last couple of years of the legislature, participated quite freely in debate. I remember having a lively debate with Jeff Charlebois — it would be in the 1969 session — dealing with certain changes in The Trade Union Act. And I think a little look at the Hansard would indicate that it had lots of cut and thrust across the floor, because he was putting forward a point of view which I did not agree with. I had spoken prior to him, and he had cast some reflections on my remarks, and I wished to at least point out some of the deficiencies as I saw them in his remarks. And so it went. It will, I think, be clear from this that he was an active member of the legislature.

It is my impression that he represented his constituents well. He was a person who had a presence about him because, I suppose, of his extensive service in municipal government, and his business associations which allowed him to speak with authority and conviction, and to make a very useful contribution to the House.

And I join with others in extending our condolences to the

bereaved family.

**Hon. Mr. Folk:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to join the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in remembering the contribution that Jeff Charlebois has made to both the city of Saskatoon and the province of Saskatchewan.

As has been pointed out by the Premier, Mr. Charlebois was a very active person. He was born and raised and educated in Saskatoon, and operated their family business, A.L. Charlebois Co. Ltd., for many years. And he is probably the epitome of a community leader, a person who got involved in numerous organizations as has been outlined by the Premier, and certainly was one who was always ready to give his time and efforts into any venture that was going on in our community.

As has been mentioned also, he served on our Saskatoon city council from 1965 to '66 and represented the Saskatoon City Park-University constituency in the Saskatchewan legislature from '67 to '71.

I think it's probably most appropriate that it be mentioned today that Mr. Charlebois was the president of the 1971 Canada Winter Games which was held in Saskatoon. As everybody is aware, the 1989 Canada Summer Games are going to be held in Saskatoon.

Certainly in the conferences I've been at as Minister of Culture of Recreation, there is still a lot of talk about those games that went on in 1971, how a city could get together and build a mountain and really host for the first time some Canada games.

Certainly Jeff Charlebois, as the president of those games, did an excellent job, probably more than any other, I think, influence in the city at that time, really brought our community together to really go on the national stage and to some extent I'm sure the international stage.

So I think that really is emblematic of his contributions. And as the two other previous speakers have already mentioned, he was never afraid to get up and speak his mind, whether he totally agreed with someone's philosophy or not, but he was willing to give it from his perspective.

Also, the Charlebois family are friends of my parents especially, and I also got to personally know him over the years. And as well as being a very avid sportsman, and a sports fan, Mr. Charlebois was always one to lend support to people in the community. And I can certainly speak personally of that through the years on sporting scenes. When we had some success or some disappointments he was always one of the first ones there to lend congratulations or condolences and encourage you to keep on.

So I would join with the speakers in sending our condolences to the Charlebois family and his many, many friends in our province. And on behalf of the constituents of Saskatoon University I would like to state that our city of Saskatoon and the province of Saskatchewan will definitely miss Mr. Jeff Charlebois. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, by leave of the Assembly:

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

## MOTIONS

### Referral of Provincial Auditor's Report to Standing Committee on Public Accounts

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Before orders of the day and by leave of the Assembly I move, seconded by the Minister of Health:

That the report of the Provincial Auditor for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1985, be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Motion agreed to.

(1545)

### Referral of Retention and Disposal Schedules to Standing Committee on Communications

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, by leave of the Assembly:

That the retention and disposal schedules tabled during the fifth session of the 20th legislature and approved by the public documents committee be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on Communications.

Motion agreed to.

### Referral of By-laws and Amendments of the Professional Associations to Special Committee on Regulations

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — By leave of the Assembly, seconded by the Minister of Health:

That the by-laws of the professional associations, and amendments thereto, be referred as tabled to the Special Committee on Regulations.

Motion agreed to.

### Referral of Annual Reports and Financial Statements of Crown Corporations and Agencies to Standing Committee on Corporations

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, by leave of the Assembly:

That the annual reports and financial statements of the various Crown corporations and related agencies be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on

Crown Corporations.

Motion agreed to.

### **Referral of Public Accounts to Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, by leave of the Assembly:

That the public accounts of the province of Saskatchewan for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1985 be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Motion agreed to.

### **SPECIAL ORDER**

#### **ADDRESS IN REPLY**

**Mr. Klein:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am honoured today to move the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne and, indeed, I am more than honoured. I feel that it is a rare and valued privilege that has been bestowed upon me. And in my mind, and I'm sure in the minds of Saskatchewan residents everywhere, the programs and the policy initiatives outlined in the Speech from the Throne will be seen as some of the most laudatory initiatives ever undertaken by any provincial government for the people it represents. Indeed, I doubt that there is any other jurisdiction in this great and magnificent country of ours where residents are so well served by a government with such vision, such enterprise, such endeavour, such energy and such compassion.

I think that in Saskatchewan today we can finally say that we truly have a government of the people and a government for the people. We have a government whose strength and wisdom comes from the people, and a government that consults and co-operates with the people. We have a government in Saskatchewan today that carries with it the support of all the good citizens of our province.

Reviewing the Speech from the Throne and studying the initiatives the Saskatchewan government is again taking, I can well understand why in the past four years so many of the Saskatchewan government's undertakings have been copied and duplicated by administrations in other provinces. I believe that Saskatchewan is in the vanguard of positive change in Canada today and that our new strength adds to the strength of Canada as a whole. Our province is a credit to our nation's great heritage.

Canada is a nation of industrious people. It is a nation which people of enterprise and endeavour have come to from around the world. Nowhere in Canada is this more true than right here in Saskatchewan. We see vigour; we see tenacity in our ethnic mix. We see determination and dedication in the people who make up our culture. This government very much reflects the people that it represents.

Like the Saskatchewan people, the Saskatchewan government is also visionary and tenacious. Like the

Saskatchewan people in urban areas and rural regions, in hospitals and schools, on our farms and in our small businesses, our government is innovative, caring, and compassionate.

Let me say that I should not have been surprised by the legislative proposals unveiled in the Speech from the Throne. Looking back over the legislative record of our government, I can see that our latest proposals are set on a solid foundation. From 1982 onwards the Saskatchewan government, backed up solidly by the Saskatchewan people, has set a steady course to enhance the lives of our residents in all areas.

Let me point out some of the aspects of the foundations that have been built over the past four years for the Saskatchewan people. In 1982, sky-rocketing mortgage rates were devastating our nation. Families — solid, hardworking families — were facing mortgage rates of 18, 20, and 22 per cent. They were literally about to lose their homes.

Some politicians stood idly by and said, well, that's tough; that's how it must be. But not the new Saskatchewan government. Not the Saskatchewan people. Our government and our people are one. We are together. We govern with the people. And we take our ideas from the people.

So with the Saskatchewan people, this government introduced the first mortgage rebate program in Canada, bringing mortgage protection into our nation and ensuring that no home owner would face mortgage rates higher than 13.25 per cent. Some 44,000 Saskatchewan residents have been or are in the mortgage rebate plan. Some \$60 million has been committed to ensuring that no Saskatchewan family loses its home due to mortgage rate increases.

Again in 1982, inflation was ravaging the pockets of the Saskatchewan people, but the Saskatchewan government, backed up by the province's residents, noted that for years and years the provincial treasury had been ransacking residents right into their pockets by imposing a completely unnecessary tax on gasoline.

Now we all know that the price of gasoline, the price of energy, puts up prices all the way down the line — cab fares, bus fares, the transportation of food, clothing, and consumer goods of all kinds. Everything that we buy that has to be transported has a built-in cost added to it, determined by the price of gasoline. Yet in the days of inflation and high interest rates, the government was benefiting by imposing a provincial tax on gasoline.

The solution was simple. The Saskatchewan government said, enough. The Saskatchewan people said, enough. And the tax on gasoline was abolished overnight. In just four years the Saskatchewan people — young people, old people, single people, families — have saved some \$600 million in direct costs by this move, and untold millions in indirect costs.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is what good

government is all about. This is what is meant by a government of the people and a government for the people. This is why Canadians nation-wide extol the virtues of the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people. No wonder Canadians coast-to-coast look at Saskatchewan with pride and tell us that we make Canada an even greater nation — greater than it is — because of the initiative, and our drive, and our energy here in Saskatchewan.

You may recall too that in 1982 the hopes and dreams of young farmers were being frustrated and devastated by high interest rates. They faced the prospect of being tenants on the very land that their parents, their grandparents, and even their great-grandparents, had farmed. And worse, they faced the prospects of being serfs to the state, since the state was taking over farm land once owned by proud Saskatchewan families.

But in 1982 the Saskatchewan people said, enough — we want to see the family farm preserved; people should own farms, not governments. So as one of the many initiatives, the Saskatchewan government, and again in co-operation with the Saskatchewan people, developed the farm purchase program under which young, starting-out farmers could buy land at 8 per cent interest rates. Eight per cent — think of it.

When the interest rates were in the 20 per cent range, the Saskatchewan government, backed up by the Saskatchewan people, committed itself to ensuring that the family farm would be preserved — and preserved as a family farm, not as some monolithic state enterprise — and enabled young farm men and women to get on the road to farm ownership.

Today, when we see the sad spectre of farmers in other provinces going bankrupt, it is extremely satisfying to see that some 5,000 young farm men and women have been helped by the farm purchase program to own the land that they farm — and in Saskatchewan we would have it no other way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I look back on four years of good, solid government in this province, and I see that in every area — in health, in education, in agriculture, in business, in sports, and the list goes on and on — I see bold, imaginative initiatives that have made Saskatchewan the jewel in Canada's glorious crown.

I see an oil industry that is alive, where one was dying before. I see small-business people, dedicated and innovative men and women, being assisted by small-business interest loans of nine and five-eighths per cent. I see venture capital corporations being formed with the help of tax credits. I see Saskatchewan residents actually being able to really own a part of Crown corporations.

Looking back over the past four years, I see so much that the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people have done together. And now in this Speech from the Throne I see so much that the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people will do together.

Just a few minutes ago I said that these latest initiatives by, and on behalf of, Saskatchewan people would add to the foundation that has determinedly been built over the last four years. Having refreshed our memories about that foundation and about the tremendous achievements of the Saskatchewan people in building that foundation, I would like to speak a little bit about the challenge and the opportunity before us. That challenge and that opportunity was outlined in the Speech from the Throne.

In a nutshell, I think we can say that the aims of the Saskatchewan government and the aims of the Saskatchewan people over the last four years — and over the coming four years too, I might add — can be summed up in protection, participation, and opportunity.

(1600)

When you spend \$1 billion on health care — more than has ever been spent by any other government in our province's long and noble history — you can see where protection comes in.

When you see thousands of Saskatchewan residents buying shares in Crown corporations, obtaining low-interest, small-business loans, buying their own farms, and getting involved in dozens of ways in society through various government programs and policies, you can see where participation comes in.

And when you see that Saskatchewan has a 92 per cent employment rate, and where Saskatchewan now has a thriving industrial base, you can see where opportunity comes in.

Now as we face the future, we see in the Speech from the Throne how these three areas — protection, participation, and opportunity — are all again emphasized. You also see, I might predict, initiatives that, like other Saskatchewan initiatives across the past four years, will be copied by other provinces. And I'm glad that other provinces will follow our lead. I'm glad what Saskatchewan does today, other provinces will do tomorrow. I'm glad that the vitality and the verve of the Saskatchewan people is infectious.

It's exciting to stand before all of you today and anticipate the future with you. And that future is already under way. Within a few weeks the world's fair in Vancouver will open its doors, and for the first time Saskatchewan will have its own individual pavilion at such an exposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Speaker, the whole world will see what Saskatchewan has to offer. The Employment Development Agency and the \$600-million employment development fund are this very day creating new jobs for our residents in a fully co-ordinated way. No other province in Canada has launched such a comprehensive plan of job creation.

Construction is under way at the Co-op heavy oil upgrader. At \$600 million it's the largest industrial project in Regina's history. And it came into reality because of



co-operation between the Saskatchewan government and talented and dedicated individuals in the co-op movement.

And we are close to agreement on the \$3 billion Lloydminster upgrader, a project that will create thousands of jobs and inject hundreds of millions of dollars into our growing economy.

We have led the way for free trade agreement with the United States. This agreement will create millions of new jobs across Canada in coming years and provide Saskatchewan people with new markets and new opportunities for their products and for their services. This is one of the boldest, most imaginative moves ever made by a provincial government.

We have revived the oil industry into record breaking investment and exploration. One thousand wells drilled was a record; 2,000 wells drilled, yet another record, and that record will be broken. Such activities mean jobs and business for those in our cities and those in our urban centres.

We pulled together the task force on rural development to bring opportunity and justice to rural municipalities and rural people. We brought clean, fresh water to Saskatchewan's capital city, ending years and years of total neglect in this area.

We put the financial resources of the province behind health care, behind education, behind agriculture, behind industrial expansion, and behind our young people, in a commitment never achieved before. We instituted tourist promotion campaigns and programs to bring this clean and lucrative industry to our province. It's an industry that uses what virtually every service business has to offer in one way or another.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have done so much to put our province and the Saskatchewan people in a position where they can take advantage of the future, and now we are about to do more. We are about to bring more industry to our province. We are about to bring more stability and growth to our agricultural sector and repay Saskatchewan farmers for their years of dedication and hard work on behalf of our province. We are about to give more protection and security to our province's young people. We are about to continue our commitment to bring government and government services closer to the people and to make government more open and more responsive to the people of our province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for many years Saskatchewan had a government that concentrated on the urban centres of this province and increasingly ignored the rural areas. But in a province such as Saskatchewan, the urban centres are dependent on the health and vitality of the rural areas for their own survival. If our rural areas are allowed to decline, then before too long our urban centres will decline also.

Saskatchewan is, I contend, a closely-knit province in which the urban centres and the rural centres are mutually dependent on each other for their prosperity and for their security. If Saskatchewan as a whole is to

thrive, rural Saskatchewan must thrive too. Rural Saskatchewan must have all the services and advantages of the larger urban centres. The planned transfer of the crop insurance corporation to Melville and the agricultural credit corporation to Swift Current, as well as plans to create locally-based rural economic development corporations, are major endeavours that show that this government is committed to rural Saskatchewan as it is committed to residents in urban centres.

It has been said in life that it isn't only the big things that matter; it's the little things that matter, too. Big initiatives always grab newspaper headlines, but small or seemingly small initiatives can better the lives of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of residents.

This is why I was pleased to hear in the Speech from the Throne that the government — the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people — are to embark on a five-year program to rid rural Saskatchewan of party lines and give rural residents individual telephone line service. This is being done not only for social reasons, but it is a recognition that in rural areas farmers, small-business men and women — indeed, everyone — deserves and needs the protection and convenience offered by individual line service.

I recall that just four years ago it was forbidden — that's right; in a democracy, Mr. Deputy Speaker — it was forbidden to go out and buy your own telephone. Within the past four years the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people changed all that. Now we are moving further in the advance of telephone service by expanding individual line telephones where only party lines existed before. It's a commendable advance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and as I mentioned earlier, one of those seemingly little endeavours that really aren't so little when they apply to you.

Our government is also taking initiatives to develop television services to small communities. Smaller communities all over North America have been short-changed when it came to television services. New technology, coupled with the will to do it, now means that there are no excuses for not extending television services to all areas, particularly in the fields of business and agriculture, and these services will have educational benefits as well.

No government in Saskatchewan's history has worked closer with municipalities, both rural and urban, than has the current government. New financial initiatives have been given to urban and rural municipal governments, and more initiatives are to be taken. I'm glad to see that the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people will, by working with the federal government, be negotiating a new financial assistance package to replace the current municipal water and sewer infrastructure throughout Saskatchewan.

I must commend the government also for its plans to protect municipalities, hospitals, and school boards from sky-rocketing liability insurance costs. Rapidly rising insurance costs are threatening the financial stability of such institutions, and it shows a lot of foresight on the

provincial government's part that it is acting on this worry before the proverbial horse has escaped from the barn.

You know, laws are supposed to protect people, not hinder them. That's one reason our government in the past four years has abolished some 1,300 outdated regulations that frustrated people in their daily lives. It's a pleasure to see that this program of regulatory reform is to be continued. I might add that, in my opinion, governments that trust and have confidence in the people they represent do not try and quash their lives by clamping down laws and regulations on everything that moves or seems to move.

This government believes in the basic common sense and decency of the people it represents. It doesn't believe in putting a straight-jacket of bureaucracy around their bodies and their heads. Fewer laws, trustful people — that's my belief. And it is also the belief both of this government and of the province's men and women.

The Saskatchewan government believes in the family. Our mortgage rebate program shows that. But more, we believe in the traditions that guided family life in this province generation after generation. And that's one reason a Film and Video Classification Act was introduced at the last session of this legislature. We believe in decency, and we believe in faith. I'm proud to see that the laws respecting custody and management of property of children will be updated and modernized under the child custody and guardianship Act.

Another major worry will be relieved with the introduction of the child abduction Act. And yet more worries will be eased by a new program to educate young Saskatchewanians about the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that young people are the corner-stone of this province's future. That's why the current Saskatchewan government is now spending more on education and health than any other government before it and, on a per capita basis, more than any other government in Canada.

We have to protect our young people. We have to inspire them. We have to educate them. We have to create opportunities for them. They also deserve justice. I doubt if any other government in our nation has bettered the Saskatchewan government on its initiatives and innovations on behalf of young people.

(1615)

The latest move, including a commitment to improve financial assistance to students, continues this proud and just record of commitment to Saskatchewan youth. It's a record that is unblemished, and it is a record that is worthy of support from all corners of this House. Saskatchewan young people deserve the greatest commitment possible from their government, and they deserve the greatest respect from every member of this legislature.

I believe that in areas designed to enhance the lives of our young people, every member of this House should work

for quick passage of these new initiatives. I have confidence in the decency and wisdom of all members to know that this will be so.

One of the major issues of the past decade has been pension plan reform. Some of us recall when our grandparents or our parents had to retire on inadequate pensions or even on non-existent pensions. Both federally and provincially, major improvements have been made to ensure that senior citizens no longer face destitution when they retire. But as they say, although much has been done, much remains to be done.

In this area, Saskatchewan is again about to lead the way by establishing a vehicle for a voluntary Saskatchewan pension plan for home-makers, part-time employees, and small-business people.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know from my own experience just how much a pension scheme is needed. Indeed it has been talked about across this nation for years, but nothing has been done about it — nothing until now, that is. I'm proud that it is a government of which I am a part that has undertaken to rectify this situation. This initiative is typical of the vision of this government, and I know that Saskatchewan home-makers, part-time workers, and small-business people will look upon this initiative as a major endeavour to ease their burdens of worries significantly.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I have now covered many of the points one might place under the heading of protection in our government's latest legislative program. There are more, and they too are commendable. But I feel that other members of this House may wish to concentrate on them, and I see no reason for labouring over points that can adequately be addressed by my colleagues.

I would like to say though . . . The member from Regina North East, Mr. Deputy Speaker, chooses to speak from his chair. I understand that he moved from Humboldt to Regina North East. That's quite a move, and I don't know that everybody should be proud of that.

I would like to say though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that while a government should offer protection to the people it serves, it should not suffocate them. I think a certain brand of politicians learned at the provincial election, and will learn again, that there is a difference between providing protection, and suffocation.

The current government provides protection where it is needed. It does not try to strangle initiative where it is needed. It does not try to strangle initiative and thwart residents with policies and programs that are not needed. Certainly it does not extract unnecessary taxes from their pockets for unnecessary programs.

Now we come to opportunity. Let me start off a little sadly. I was appalled to see over the last few decades some one million Saskatchewan residents, one million of our native sons and daughters, having to leave this province to seek opportunity elsewhere. One million persons. And that's just about the number of people who live in Saskatchewan today. Half of our population had to

flee because of lack of opportunity. What a condemnation of past governments! What a shame! What a disgrace!

However, times have changed. In the past four years Saskatchewan's population has grown, and it has grown because not only do residents no longer have to leave Saskatchewan, but because those who were forced out of Saskatchewan prior to 1982 are coming back, and Canadians from other provinces are coming here, and they're coming here because they have heard of the new opportunities that exist in Saskatchewan. That opportunity is marked by the 92 per cent employment rate that I mentioned earlier; by the oil industry that breaks record after record in investment and exploration, and whose royalties now provide fully one-quarter of all government revenues; by dynamic small-business people who are creating new businesses and new jobs at every opportunity; and by huge projects such as the \$600 million Co-op upgrader in Regina.

Yes, there is opportunity in Saskatchewan that make our cousins in Alberta envious. Prior to 1982, it used to be said that God had blessed Alberta because of the progressive government that province had elected. Now, since 1982, it seems that God is smiling on Saskatchewan. I wonder if that is at least partly due to the fact that we now have a similarly progressive government in our province. I wouldn't be at all surprised, knowing the mysterious and wondrous way in which he works.

Opportunity abounds in this province today. It abounds because the Saskatchewan people have been free to search for their own destiny, no longer being directed to dance to the fiddler's tune of socialism. And I see some members squirm when I mention socialism. And might they well squirm, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And they'll certainly squirm at the next provincial election before that's over.

However, I told myself on arising from my seat today that I'd try to keep on the high road during this speech; leave the low road to the members of the opposition, which is typical. Let me talk about opportunity and not about the failures of the members in opposite benches.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only do we have the highest year-by-year employment rate in Canada here in Saskatchewan, but we have also created over 30,000 new jobs. We've done so despite recession, despite drought and tough times, generally.

We have established an Employment Development Agency and an employment development fund. We have seen to it that thousands of Saskatchewan students have good summer jobs. We stretched out the arm of assistance to residents wanting to create and build small businesses. We have searched the world in order to bring new investment and new jobs to Saskatchewan. We have poured hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars into education in order to give our young people the skills and abilities they need to gain satisfying and well-paying jobs for themselves, or even to create their own small business.

Opportunity. Perhaps that's a new way that we should

actually be spelling Saskatchewan.

I am pleased to see that in the coming months our government is going to continue its successful job creation and business development programs of the past several years. I'm particularly pleased to see that programs, to enable those unfortunate residents on social welfare to gain skills, will be both continued and expanded.

In the past, previous governments tended to throw money — and small pittances of money they were — at those on welfare, and then told them to go away and hide. Don't let us see you, the politicians on the left cried; don't embarrass us; go away. But not this government. The current Saskatchewan government believes that everyone has a right to enjoy the fruits of our society. We believe that people must be given the opportunity to gain the skills to enable them to build successful and happy lives.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, no man or woman wants to be on welfare. They want to get off welfare. Sadly, prior to 1982, there were no real vehicles to enable them to move from social assistance to self assistance. And now there are. And I'm proud of the compassion and common-sense way our government has moved in this area. Opportunity is not only for those at the top, but also for those at the bottom. Opportunity must allow people to move from the bottom towards the top. That's what good government is all about, and today that's what Saskatchewan is all about.

I see nothing wrong in people having good jobs. I see nothing wrong in people owning their own homes. I see nothing wrong in people owning their own farms. I see nothing wrong in people owning their own small businesses. In our province today we see increasing opportunity in all these areas. And that increasing opportunity has come about because the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people have worked together to bring it about. More opportunities are about to be created, and some of those opportunities are outlined in the Speech from the Throne.

Within the past four years fewer and fewer strikes have taken place in Saskatchewan. There's a new attitude among government, business, and labour. There is an atmosphere of co-operation, not confrontation. No one wants to go on strike. No common-sense worker wants to lose pay by indulging in a labour dispute. However, some union leaders, backed by some politicians out to advance their own cause, force strikes upon decent, hard-working employees. But strikes in Saskatchewan are becoming a thing of the past. Workers are feeling more secure. Employees are seeing more opportunity for fulfilling their dreams.

Saskatchewan residents, always sensible with their money, are finding new opportunities to keep more of it and to invest more of it for the future. In the past four years this Saskatchewan government has created a wide range of new investment opportunities for our residents. And it's a pleasure to see that our government is planning to expand the range of investment vehicles for

Saskatchewan people to invest in job-creating capital ventures.

The latest initiative — to have discussions with labour unions and employee associations concerning how such investments might be structured — is both visionary and commendable. It's another example of the growing co-operation between government, business, and labour.

Today more than ever before, all people in Saskatchewan are working together to provide opportunity for the people they represent and for each other. We have some of the best labour leaders in Canada right here in Saskatchewan. We have union officials who want to see the lives of people they represent enhanced and enriched. We have union leaders who want to help employees increase productivity and profitability so that companies can pass on some of those increases to their employees. And I commend such union leaders. I'm sure they will be more than willing to give their advice and expertise to our government in creating some of these new investment vehicles.

In this same area, it excites me to see that the young entrepreneur program is about to be expanded. Again I must stress that our young people are the foundation of our future. It is the young entrepreneur of today who will create the jobs and prosperity of tomorrow. Whether young entrepreneurs are in the fields of tourism, manufacturing, retailing, they deserve both our moral support and the support of a wide range of government programs covering their fields.

Some of the most successful companies and some of the most successful innovations in the world have been by young people. I can think of Apple computer, for one, that has literally become a household name throughout the entire world. And I simply have to admire the ingenuity and tenacity of today's young people. I've met so many people in Saskatchewan who seem to be a lot smarter than I was at their age, and I'm really not ashamed to admit that.

So I believe that this government must, as it is doing, give every encouragement and opportunity to Saskatchewan's younger people, whether it is to provide them with better schools and educational facilities for them, as we are; or to provide opportunities for them in agriculture, as we are; or to enable them to turn their entrepreneurial dreams into reality. We must do it.

I contend that every single dollar that we invest in our young people — whether in education, in sports, or for them to build careers — is an investment for the future. We simply must continue this commitment to Saskatchewan youth.

But life is not solely composed of work, Mr. Speaker — even though a lot of us get a lot of enjoyment from work, whether that be a student studying in school, or someone building a new enterprise — but life, as they say, is also made for play. Throughout its tenure this government has dedicated itself to enhancing the quality of life for the residents of Saskatchewan. More funds than ever before have been committed not only to health care but to sports, to recreation, and to culture. We believe that

Saskatchewan residents want to enjoy their leisure time.

This is one of the reasons that in the Speech from the Throne the establishment of five new provincial parks and a wilderness park has been announced. In this day and age with so many pressures being put on individuals, places where we can relax are becoming increasingly important.

The establishment of the five new provincial parks and the province's first-ever wilderness park will also help to preserve large areas of Saskatchewan from unnecessary industrial encroachment, and protect the environment. To my mind the creation of these new parks should have taken place a long time ago. But as members of this House well know, when the initial opportunity to create them came upon us in the late 1960s, that opportunity was ignored, and it was ignored by government in the days through the 1970s — a disgrace that is now to be rectified.

(1630)

Opportunity, Mr. Speaker. What a word. Throughout this throne speech document I see opportunity for youth, opportunity for farmers, opportunity for employment, opportunity for business creation, and opportunity for leisure. It is a great word, Mr. Speaker, and one that fits in well with the promise of Saskatchewan and the energy of our residents.

However, while I could comment on and outline many other initiatives that might well be classified as opportunity in this document, I believe in leaving something for other members of this House. So I'll pass on from opportunity to participation.

For many years, we in this province had a government that didn't want the Saskatchewan people to participate in anything. Leave us alone, said the government of the day. Just vote for us at election time. Let us run your lives and you for the next four years, but don't try and participate and don't expect us to be accountable. That's how the previous government of Saskatchewan operated. But you know, it didn't take the people of Saskatchewan long to get tired of being courted at election time and tossed out the previous rascals and they elected a government they could trust, and a government that trusted them.

Quite frankly, I think we are all better off with that decision. Well, maybe 10 or 12, 10 or 11 members of this House are worse off for it, but they have simply reaped the rewards for their unjust actions. Vengeance came swiftly at the ballot box for these people, Mr. Speaker, and it will come swiftly at the ballot box once again. Maybe in a few weeks, maybe in a few months, but it will surely come.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the previous administration didn't want residents to participate in the government of this province or in its agencies or in its Crown corporations. The previous administration sat at the government table and greedily gorged itself on the riches of this province and hid behind the walls of secrecy until the voters decided to give it a hefty case of indigestion and tear

down those walls.

This administration opened up government to the people, and what happened? Nothing bad happened, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan residents didn't run wild in the streets. They responded to the opening of government with respect and with interest. They welcomed the opportunity. There's that marvellous word again, Mr. Speaker. They welcomed the opportunity to participate in the government of this province.

Before 1982, the Saskatchewan people were told that utility rates would be set by the government, and if the people of Saskatchewan didn't like those rates they didn't need to pay them. They could go without utilities. Some choice. Some choice. The previous government decided it could use utility rate hikes to line its pockets and hide its deficits in a shell game of hidden accounting procedures, but this government put a stop to that charade.

We established the Public Utilities Review Commission and gave it the authority to reject unwarranted utility rate hikes. We said that Saskatchewan people deserved the protection — a second chance, if you like — against unnecessary utility rate hikes, whether they be for power, telephones, or for something else, and we set up an independent commission to give residents that protection.

Some people said, how can you run a government like this? Others said, isn't it going to be embarrassing for you when this commission rejects an increase? Well the past four years have shown that it is possible to run an open and responsive government. Even though increases have been rejected, it hasn't been embarrassing to either the government or the utilities concerned. Again, we trust the Saskatchewan people and they trust us. And now we are going to trust them even more. This trust is shown in our plans for a freedom of information and privacy Act and the establishment of a code of conduct to govern the activities of elected officials.

Mr. Speaker, again I heard from the members of the opposition just a little bit of noise. I didn't see any of our government members squirm, and that tells me something and it should tell the voters something too. I see no reason whatsoever why a government should try to hide its activities from the people it represents. A government that has something to hide, a government that lives in secret shame, would cringe at the thought of a freedom of information and privacy Act and an ethics code for elected officials. But this government wants residents to test it, to believe in it, and to see how it operates on their behalf.

We want voters to look inside their government, and I stress — their government. We want voters to be a part of the ongoing process of government, not just on an election by election basis, not just on year by year or a month by month or a week by week basis. No, we want them to be an active part of government whenever they want to be an active part of government. We have given this province back to the people, Mr. Speaker, and over the past four years we have demonstrated this in many, many ways. This new initiative is another example of our major commitment to open government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say here and now that no ethical member of this House would ever speak against the Bills governing freedom of information and conduct, and when the legislation is before this House it will be fascinating to see if any member does stand up and talk against that Bill. And if we have such members in this House, I hope that every voter will take note of their names and take note also of the political party to which they belong.

Mr. Speaker, I have now spent some considerable time reviewing portions of our government's legislative record and of its proposed initiatives. There are points on which I have not touched, both of our past record and of future intentions. But I believe I have stressed the government's general character and intentions since I rose from my seat.

Again, we believe in opportunity for Saskatchewan residents in all areas of life, whether it be opportunity for health care, opportunity for education, opportunity for work or leisure. We believe in protection for the residents of Saskatchewan, whether that protection be from interest rates or other plights beyond their control. And we believe residents have a right to participate fully in their government's endeavours.

This demonstrates our commitment to Saskatchewan and our commitment to the Saskatchewan people. It's a commitment of which I am proud. It's a commitment that will grow in the years ahead — and I stress years. My pride in this commitment causes me to move with honour, Mr. Speaker, and seconded by the member for Humboldt:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Domotor:** — As we commence the fifth session of the 20th legislature, I would like to start my remarks by stating that the Speech from the Throne has covered a large area of concerns that this government has committed itself to.

As MLA for the Humboldt constituency I can say that the people of Humboldt are proud, industrious, and visionary; and that is why they supported Premier Devine and this government in the 1982 provincial election — to resurrect free enterprise and bring in a breath of fresh air. I can assure this House that the voters of Humboldt constituency will give their support again in the

upcoming election.

In listening to the words of the member for Regina North, one of his points stayed with me. That point was commitment. The member spoke much of commitment and it was indeed refreshing to hear him use this term a few times. It's a term that in a very real way describes the past four years in Saskatchewan. They have been four years of commitment to the Saskatchewan people; four years of determined effort by the government to give the Saskatchewan people the kind of government they so much deserve and want.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, this kind of commitment was a long time coming. This is especially true when one considers rural Saskatchewan. Prior to 1982, Saskatchewan had a government that ran roughshod over the people of this province. It had a government that wanted to control the Saskatchewan people financially, socially, and emotionally. It had a government that was committed, not to the people of Saskatchewan, but to itself. It had a government that robbed the Saskatchewan people of their heritage and their dreams.

Mr. Speaker, between the years of 1971 and 1982 some 10,000 good, decent, hard-working Saskatchewan farm families were driven off their land by the former government. Ten thousand of our province's farm families were forced into destitution. Hundreds of small-business men and women in rural communities were forced into bankruptcy by policies of the previous government, the remaining members who now occupy the opposition benches in the House. Rural communities with long traditions disappeared under the socialist master plan designed by the previous government. That is what the word commitment means to the previous government, a commitment to big brother.

What heartens me is that in the past four years we have been the kind of government that has helped to undo all the mistakes the previous government perpetrated on Saskatchewan people. We have seen a government that has committed itself to the enhancement of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan people, rather than a government that ravaged the province and the people.

The previous government decided it couldn't afford decent health care for Saskatchewan people. It wanted to buy potash mines. It told those who complained to stop bellyaching, because potash mines were more important than top-notch cancer treatment facilities.

Our government committed itself to Saskatchewan's health care system and is now spending more than \$1 billion a year on health care. No other government in Saskatchewan's history has spent so much. Just this month \$100 million in new money has been allocated to health care, including a new \$16 million cancer treatment facility. Just to give you an example, in my constituency there's over \$4 million in Humboldt and over \$1 million in Watrous. They will be having a new hospital in Watrous, which they have been looking for for a long time.

The previous government decided it couldn't afford to give young people first-rate educational opportunities.

This government boosted educational funding to the highest level in the province's history. We've said Saskatchewan students deserve the best educational system money could buy, and we are providing it for them. Just to give you an example, alone in the Humboldt constituency there's millions of dollars spent in renovating and building new schools.

The previous government said the day of the family farm was over. State farming was all that mattered. This government established a farm purchase program and under this program some 5,000 young starting-out farmers are now on the road to owning their own farm with 8 per cent low money.

When drought and grasshopper plague hit Saskatchewan farmers this past year, the Saskatchewan government, together with the federal government, rushed in emergency programs that put some \$500 million or half a billion dollars into farmers' pockets.

We know from past experience that the previous government would have stood by and let thousands of Saskatchewan farmers and dozens of rural communities go under rather than offer a hand of help. And why not? Fewer family farms means bigger state farms; fewer individual farmers means more people working with the government.

We believe in government working for the people. Actions say more than words. We have seen the actions of the previous government, and now we hear the words of the opposition members. We believe in health care, and we believe in educational opportunity. If they were elected again to office, it would be the same iron fist that they had before. It would be the same kowtowing to the big union leaders of eastern Canada. It would be the death of rural Saskatchewan.

I don't wish to dwell on the past, Mr. Speaker. In 1982, the citizens of Saskatchewan opted for change; they voted for a brighter future. The future is where Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan people will live: a return to free enterprise, where individuals can live without government involvement.

(1645)

It's been said that over the decades of rule by the party that sits in the opposition benches — and they should make themselves comfortable, for they will be sitting there a long time — some 1 million Saskatchewan residents were forced out of our province. What a lot of people do not realize is that 1 million residents came from rural Saskatchewan.

Well, why? Well the previous government ignored rural Saskatchewan. They refused to give adequate funding for rural municipalities. The previous government refused to fund hospitals and nursing homes in rural areas. The previous government refused to provide adequate funding for schools in rural communities. Indeed the game plan seemed to be that rural Saskatchewan was going to be reduced and more centred into the urban centres.

This government, Mr. Speaker, believes that rural Saskatchewan is the backbone of Saskatchewan. Rural Saskatchewan is very much the muscle of our province. Rural families, rural people are essential in Saskatchewan today and in the future. Rural Saskatchewan deserves the best that modern society and technology can offer. If rural Saskatchewan dies, Saskatchewan itself dies. Let me repeat that: if rural Saskatchewan dies, Saskatchewan itself dies. In other words, with a thriving rural Saskatchewan we mean a thriving province.

So any government — any committed government — must do all it can to support rural Saskatchewan. It must do it not just for reasons of decency but for common-sense purposes. If we let rural Saskatchewan decline, as did members in the opposition benches, then with it Saskatchewan itself declines.

I might say here that Canada, our great nation of the North, can't let Saskatchewan decline. The national economy couldn't exist without the billions of dollars our farm industry brings into Canada. And eastern manufacturing couldn't exist without the billions and billions of dollars that decade after decade, Saskatchewan farmers pour into the manufacturers of everything from tractors to television sets, etc.

Saskatchewan's health is of vital importance to Canada and Canadians everywhere. And this government understands that even if the previous government in all its smugness didn't, we do not have to go cap in hand to the East. The East depends on us to keep its industry moving.

A government in Saskatchewan that ignores rural Saskatchewan is at peril. A government of Saskatchewan that recognizes the importance of rural Saskatchewan, recognizes the traditions of the past and sees the challenges and opportunities on the horizons of the future.

Let's look closely at some of the initiatives for rural Saskatchewan outlined in the throne speech: protection to municipalities, hospital, and school boards from dramatically escalating liability insurance costs.

Mr. Speaker, the current government, and the future government I might add, has perceived a potential problem before it is upon us and has acted. This government is not going to sit by and see Saskatchewan municipalities go to the wall.

Moves to provide small business against high interest rates. Most business in rural Saskatchewan is small business — family-owned stores and operations. Already we have nine and five-eighths per cent small-business loans, now recognizing that small-business men and women need to be protected against unstable interest rates, just as our home owners under our mortgage rebate program. This is a commendable advance.

Installation of a province-wide buried cable system to provide dependable electrical service to 86,000 rural customers. This will eliminate the dangers of above-ground systems. Why should rural Saskatchewan be less well served than urban Saskatchewan? There's no

reason at all. The current government recognizes this. And even though the previous government decreed that rural Saskatchewan should be satisfied with second or third best, we in this government know that rural communities deserve first-rate service. Again, this is more evidence of our commitment.

We have the initiation of a five-year program to provide individual-line telephone service to subscribers in rural areas. Party lines in this age of technology are a thing of the past. If any of you have been on a party line and you have 10 or 12 on there and you have to get parts, you know what it's like.

Rural Saskatchewan lives in the present and the future. Rural Saskatchewan people deserve a telephone system and service of the same standard as those in urban areas. This program will ensure that such a standard is achieved.

There's a provision of immediate up-to-date information for farmers, relating to chemical prices. Farm input costs are the greatest burden that our farmers have to shoulder. A government that can service business and industry in urban centres with world trade statistics can surely provide our farmers with essential information. After all, agriculture is still our biggest industry no matter what the opposition and previous government think.

Creation of locally based world economic development corporations to assist rural communities in identifying and initiating their own opportunities for economic growth and development. The previous government was prepared to let rural Saskatchewan die, yet the economy of rural Saskatchewan is the heart and blood of our province. When rural Saskatchewan thrives economically, all of Saskatchewan thrives economically. Every economic advance that rural Saskatchewan makes enhances and enriches the lives of every single Saskatchewan resident. As our cities become clogged up, viable economies and rural municipalities will become increasingly essential if we are to avoid the urban plight of eastern Canada. The economic development corporations will be a major thrust in the right direction.

There's also the establishment of five new provincial parks and Saskatchewan's first wilderness park. Tourism in Saskatchewan rests in rural parks and the North of our province. These new parks, so essential to preserve our natural land and increase leisure opportunities for our residents, will add to the economic strength of rural Saskatchewan. If we can attract more tourists, we can create new services and jobs in rural Saskatchewan.

There was also mention of a development of a provincial educational, cultural, and public interest television network; an extension of commercial television service to small communities and surrounding areas. Once more, I stress that in this day and age there's no reason why technological advances do not let us provide rural residents with the same standard of service in all areas as are being enjoyed by urban residents. Rural residents have a right to all commercial television channels in operation. Educational television will assist not just young people in rural areas, but be of vital economic and social importance to adults.

We'll also see legislation to encourage livestock production through the use of investment tax credits on production facilities. This government has already undertaken many initiatives to encourage livestock production and diversify the agricultural economy. This is yet another move in the right direction.

Intensified tourism and marketing activities, including new policies governing signs on highways, will be initiated. I've already mentioned the benefits of tourism to rural Saskatchewan. Tourism is a clean industry very much in keeping with rural Saskatchewan. Tourism promotion means jobs and dollars for rural communities. It is a growth industry, and one that will have direct benefits for rural regions.

There's a continuation of the Indian economic development program. This will encourage further full participation of the province's native population in the economy. Saskatchewan's native people have demonstrated time after time that they are first-rate entrepreneurs. We have all felt gratified by the success story of Saskatchewan native business men and women.

Every government initiative for and on behalf of our native people undertaken by this government in the past four years has been well received. Our native people are energetic, innovative, and visionary. We can depend on Saskatchewan native people, and they know that they can depend on this government.

There's increased assistance for irrigation and other water conservation projects. No government in Saskatchewan's history has a better record of agricultural initiatives than this current government. We have a Premier who is a farmer. Many of our MLAs are farmers. We have introduced program after program to enhance farming in our province.

We recognize that the Leader of the Opposition is not a farmer, and therefore his emphasis never was in that direction. This government is determined to keep its faith with Saskatchewan farmers year after year. There is more evidence of that commitment.

There's also development of alternative uses for grain, including feed and oxygenated fuels. Here I think we'll be in the vanguard of the future. With world grain price stocks spilling over, with the European Economic Community bulging with food it can neither eat nor sell, I think we might have to investigate new uses for grain. I might add here that just last year we established a \$200 million agricultural research fund to increase research and development initiatives. Again this is more evidence that we are looking to the future for our farmers rather than trying to live in a past that no longer exists.

There's expansion of traditional markets for grain through representation by the government to have agriculture commodities discussed in the next round of GATT negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, at provincial premiers' conferences, at federal-provincial conferences, at international meetings, everywhere and every time this government could speak up for our farmers, it has spoken up for them.

We have worked and worked to focus attention on just how important Saskatchewan's agricultural output is to this nation. This new initiative will add substantially through thrust we have already undertaken on behalf of our farmers, rural Saskatchewan and Canada.

There will be continued decentralization of the public service through the transfer of the crop insurance corporation to Melville and the agricultural credit corporation to Swift Current. Crown corporations and government agencies that serve farmers and rural Saskatchewan are better able to serve both farmers and rural Saskatchewan when they live and work amongst the people that they serve. As well, decentralization will help give firmer economic and social bases to rural Saskatchewan.

There will be a Saskatchewan agricultural commercial equity corporation Act, another vehicle to allow Saskatchewan people to invest in Saskatchewan strengths. Why should Saskatchewan enterprises starve for funds while eastern Canadian big business can find investment the world over? Saskatchewan is a good place to invest in, and what better to invest in than agriculture? We predict that the new Saskatchewan agricultural and commercial equity corporation will become a major investment vehicle for both Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on by pointing out initiatives that this government has taken on behalf of our farmers and rural Saskatchewan since 1982 and elaborate greatly on our initiatives for the future, but I think that I have given a good general run-down on our plans. There are some initiatives in this throne speech for rural Saskatchewan that the former government could not conjure up in 11 years. We have given away a lot of things and we've helped a lot of people.

For more than one decade, between 1971 and 1982, we saw a government in operation in Saskatchewan that through inaction, almost helped engineer the decline of rural Saskatchewan. It was an awful sight. Everything our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents had built up, the previous government blithely disregarded. The previous administration simply did not listen to the people; they did not help those that they were elected to serve.

That is why the opposition is where it is, Mr. Speaker. They neglected rural Saskatchewan. Rural people are determined to keep their towns and villages alive, keep their farms in economically viable shape, keep rural schools operating, and keep rural small business alive. They are not going to cave in as easily as the government of the day previously thought. They didn't cave in and they fought to protect those interests, and this will continue in the future.

That started back in 1982, in the spring, April 26th. And we can assure this House again that if the election were called tomorrow, that the people in rural Saskatchewan will vote again the present government.

Since 1982, rural Saskatchewan has been flourishing. I mentioned earlier 5,000 young farmers are now in



the farm purchase program. In other provinces farmers are going bankrupt; farms are disappearing. In Saskatchewan, since 1982, thousands of new farm owners have come into existence.

I want to add to this point about young farmers. If rural Saskatchewan is to continue to flourish, it needs a bigger vision of young people. We have been able to enable young Saskatchewan people to stay on their farms and to live in rural areas. Unless we provide opportunities for them to do so, they will be forced into the urban areas, and then slowly and surely rural Saskatchewan will die. We must therefore keep rural Saskatchewan young and vigorous, and programs like the farm purchase program enable us to do so.

I might say that any move to enhance agriculture in our province puts a firmer foundation under rural Saskatchewan. And I again stress that when rural Saskatchewan is strong, Saskatchewan benefits. The recent announcement of the new \$78 million agriculture college will add to the long-term strength of agriculture in our province and will be able to give us the future to build on.

Through the Speech from the Throne I notice time and time again the themes of protection, participation, and opportunity. The member from Regina North did an excellent job of explaining these themes. I would like to comment on them too.

To me, Saskatchewan is like a family. Our province is like a home. In a family, the mother and father ensure that their children are protected against adversity; that children, as they grow up, fully participate in family affairs; and that they are given the opportunity to live healthy, productive lives. How does a family do all this? The parents ensure that their children have good health care. In Saskatchewan, our province as a whole now has excellent health care. The decline in our health system between 1971 and 1982 has been halted and reversed. No kind of loving parent would allow anybody to decrease or to allow anything less than that.

A family sees that it is fed with good, wholesome food. What type of parents would starve the bodies of their children. No good, decent parents would. But that's what the Saskatchewan government did to the Saskatchewan people between 1971 and 1982. It frustrated and failed agriculture production in this province. It drove families off their farms and undermined the agriculture foundation of Saskatchewan by ignoring the needs of our farmers.

A family sees that its children receive a first-rate education. What type of parents would skimp on the education quality of their children? No good, decent parents would. They would provide the best education money could buy. However, between 1971 and 1982 the previous Saskatchewan government refused to invest in education. It refused to invest in the youth of this province. While educational systems in other provinces were being upgraded to meet new demands and challenges of the technological age, the previous government let funding slip more and more behind. Now education is at a full-time high in Saskatchewan. More opportunities are being provided. Opportunities exist in

all areas.

Education and jobs. Between 1975 and 1982, when the rest of Canada was enjoying boom years of prosperity, unemployment in Saskatchewan actually climbed 114 per cent. That's a frightening nightmare figure, but it's true. Throughout the years 1975 to 1982, some 150,000 Saskatchewan residents tasted unemployment.

What's the situation now, Mr. Speaker? Unemployment in Saskatchewan, on a year-to-year basis, is the lowest in the nation. Our employment rate, at 92 per cent, is the highest in the nation. Over 30,000 new jobs have been created. There are thousands of new summer job opportunities for students.

The oil industry, forced out of Saskatchewan by the previous administration, is booming and creating jobs and businesses, particularly in rural areas. Small-business entrepreneurs are creating new services every week. Opportunity abounds in this province today, and initiatives in the Speech from the Throne will ensure that new opportunities will continue to be created.

Participation. The former administration didn't trust Saskatchewan residents to participate in the government of the province, but times have changed. The current Saskatchewan government respects and trusts the residents of Saskatchewan. It doesn't want their support only at election time. It wants their advice and support throughout the weeks, months, and years of its administration. The current government doesn't want to gobble up people's farms and buy up potash mines. The current Saskatchewan government wants people of Saskatchewan to benefit from the province's resources. The fact that the people of our province do want to participate is demonstrated by the huge success of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the Saskoil offerings. Saskatchewan people will invest in our province if they are given the opportunity to do so.

(1700)

The former administration operated in secrecy. They didn't want residents to know what it was doing or why it was doing it. Imagine if parents hid everything from their children. But the former administration didn't regard the Saskatchewan people as part of family. To tell you the truth, in the past, government and the people was more like a master-slave relationship than a participatory democracy.

This has all changed, and a new freedom of information and privacy Act and a new code of conduct for elected officials will ensure that residents have a right to know what their government is doing.

I started off my comments to you by talking about commitments. And I think that all the points I've mentioned to you show that this government is committed to the people of Saskatchewan, and that this government has responded to that commitment time and time again.

A government is not some monolithic political body. A government is very much a part of the people it

represents. And it must be flexible in its dealings with these people. It must win their trust every day. I believe the initiatives contained in the Speech from the Throne will demonstrate that the trust this government has built up with the people of Saskatchewan in the past four years will continue to increase in coming years.

In closing, might say I say that it's been an honour for me to second the Speech from the Throne, and I wish to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the time allotted and available.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak on the throne speech. It is a real honour to do that. This is in fact a historic document, and I'd like to tell you why it is a historic document.

First of all, it's the fifth throne speech of this legislature, and I predict the last throne speech of a Conservative government for the next 50 years — like the last one they gave when they were in power from 1929 to 1934. A historic document, Mr. Speaker, because this government is one that has put the province in a fiscal position that would have been unheard of four years ago.

The throne speech dealt with none of the issues that we have heard as we have travelled around the province for the last two weeks. What people are telling us very clearly is that the issues are massive tax increases at the federal level and the provincial level by Conservative governments.

They're telling us that the second main issue is unemployment — unemployment that has sky-rocketed from four and a half per cent in 1982 to 8 per cent this year, and among the young people, among young people under 25, unemployment rates of 15 per cent. And I'll tell you that in the North, where statistics don't show up because many of them are done by telephone, the unemployment rate is between 80 and 100 per cent.

And I say to you that a throne speech that comes forward and looks backward and brags about the fact that the province is doing so well when we have a \$2 billion deficit, we have massive record increases in taxes, record unemployment, 63,000 people on welfare, the biggest growth industry is in the food bank area, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that is out of touch with reality and these birds should be turfed out.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I listened with a great deal of interest when the member for Regina South or Regina North, or I'm not sure where he's from, got up in his place and talked about business in Saskatchewan. Well there's a houseboat sitting down on Albert Street that used to be up on Lac La Ronge . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, it's a new one. Well they've taken them all out of there.

The last throne speech this same man was standing in his place bragging about this business incentive he had in northern Saskatchewan. Now they've moved all the boats out. I think he's going to use that for a campaign

committee room when he hits the hustings in Regina South, out of the old houseboat that he had taken up there to try to open a new business.

But I use that only as an example, Mr. Speaker, of the total failure in every area that this government has attempted to work on. Every area they've touched has blown up in their face — every area. If you look at the small business, manufacturers, MacLeod stores, Robinsons, going broke, going out of business across the province, Ipsco laying off record numbers of workers, and the litany goes on and on and on. And I say to you that what we should be doing when we conclude this debate is allowing the people of the province to make their decision on whether or not they want four more years.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Because I'll tell you when you have a Premier that won't stand up for Saskatchewan when it comes to dealing with Ottawa, when you have a government that won't deal fairly with working people, when you have a government that has fallen out of favour even with their own friends, with the business community, I say it's time for an election and we should be having it now.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a large number, great number of points that I want to raise. I know that the time is late. I will carry on tomorrow. I therefore ask leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:08 p.m.