

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

The Clerk: — According to order and under rule 11(7) I hereby read and receive the following petitions: Of the 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, praying for an Act to amalgamate the two districts to constitute a single corporate body: and — Of Medical Services Inc. of the city of Saskatoon in the province of Saskatchewan, paying for an Act of incorporation.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Shillington: — I give notice that I shall on Friday next move:

That this Assembly urge the Saskatchewan government to restore property tax relief for farmers, home owners, renters, and small-business people, and to take steps immediately to work with municipal governments to eliminate municipal business taxes.

Mr. Sveinsson: — I give notice, Mr. Speaker, that on Friday next move I shall move:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to promptly respond to the desperate situation in new housing starts by implementing a program offering the owners of all principal residences in the province interest-free first mortgages to a maximum of \$50,000 based on appraised value.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Friday next ask the government the following question:

In the period January 1, 1985 to December 1, 1985, the amount spent by the Department of Energy and Mines in the Lanigan Advisor.

And the ballots I will just table, but they refer to the same issue, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Zazelenchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, a visiting class from Princess Alexandra School in Saskatoon. They're a class of 35 grade 7 students, accompanied by their teacher, Dr. Lozinsky, and chaperons, Mrs. Cousins, Mr. Dave Adolph, Mr. George Isbister, and Miss Robin Cohen, visiting from Australia. I'll be pleased to meet with the group at 2:30 for pictures and refreshments. We hope you have a worthwhile educational stay here in Regina, and a safe trip home, and I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sveinsson: — I'd just like to introduce to the Assembly through you, Mr. Speaker, 66 students from Centennial elementary school in north-west Regina. They're here today to observe question period and the workings of the Assembly. I believe they're going to stay for 15 minutes after question period. I will meet with them for drinks after that time, and I look forward to doing that. I would ask you to give them a good round of applause.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Sale of Saskatchewan Potash Overseas

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct my question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister responsible for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister, can you confirm that in March of 1985 you met privately with executives of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and representatives of an international commodity broker, Cord Enterprises International? And can you confirm that at the meeting you suggested that if Cord Enterprises had an interest in selling Saskatchewan potash overseas, that they should meet with the overseas selling agency, Canpotex?

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, obviously any time someone comes and indicates that they have the ability to help us sell potash in Saskatchewan, we're interesting in talking to them. At the meeting that I assume the member for Quill Lakes is referring to, there were no officials from PCS present, but there were people from Cord International, Lou Corral by name, and we did in fact hold a meeting at that time.

Mr. Koskie: — Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware that following his referral of Cord Enterprises to Canpotex, that Canpotex issued a sales authorization dated September 16, 1985, which authorized this company to sell up to 600,000 tonnes of Canadian potash overseas? Are you aware of that?

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, Cord International came and indicated that they were in a position to sell potash to an offshore market that was at that time undefined. They met with, as I understand it, Canpotex. Canpotex did some preliminary investigation. And as to the timing of the document to which the member refers, I don't have details on that.

As he is aware, this case is before the courts, but Canpotex did in fact do some preliminary investigation. They determined that the market that Cord International proposed to sell in was not incremental, that it would simply be replaced with tonnage in a market which we already had, and in their opinion would be an element that would force price down, would not be in any way beneficial to the marketing of Saskatchewan potash.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — is the minister aware that on November 4, 1985, the state trading company of India, Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation, agreed to purchase up to 150,000 tonnes of potash from Canpotex,

subject to final authorization from Canpotex, and that Canpotex denied that authorization, effectively killing a \$14 million sale of Saskatchewan potash to India?

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, it's certainly not my intention to try this case in this forum, but since it's been brought up and since the Leader of the Opposition has indicated the type of aggressive marketing that he's always discussing, maybe I could add a few facts. He's indicated that he has taken up the cause of Cord International. Immediately after . . . A couple of facts that we should maybe . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order!

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, some preliminary investigations were undertaken into the credibility of the company that had come forward to Mr. Lou Corral. It was interesting in my discussion with Mr. Corral the number of times that he assured me that he was, in fact, an honourable man. However, we had Canpotex do some investigations. They obviously don't have the capacity to do it all, and they hired Dun & Bradstreet to check into this corporation.

When Dun & Bradstreet . . . and I'll simply read the telex that returned. They were given an address of 35 Park Avenue in New York. Dun & Bradstreet indicates that that name of Cord International is unknown to local authorities in New York. A company by the name of U.S. Continental Investors is located at 375 Park. They say they represent Cord International; that Cord International is in fact located in Garden Grove, California.

Dun & Bradstreet then attempted to locate them in Garden Grove and were unsuccessful. They had never been heard of in Garden Grove, California.

Follow that, Canpotex attempted to make telephone contact with Cord International. They were informed that a company of that name had existed, but the phone had been disconnected. Following that, Mr. Speaker, Canpotex, in fact, contacted MMTC (Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation) to determine the status of any dealings they may have had with Lou Corral or Cord International, and I will read into the record the telex that came back from Cord International. It's dated January the 9th:

We would like to state categorically that MMTC does not authorize anybody to negotiate purchase of any fertilizer on its behalf stop In these circumstances the question of MMTC authorizing Cord Enterprises International or another organization to purchase MOP (muriate of potash) on its behalf does not arise stop We trust this makes the position clear stop

I should indicate, Mr. Speaker, as well . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. I would ask the minister to bring his answer to an immediate close.

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, I should indicate as well that the day after Lou Corral came to visit my office I had a visit from the RCMP carrying out an investigation

for the FBI — which I won't go into details — but I think it's safe to say that Canpotex determined that this company, which is clearly the choice of the party opposite for their aggressive advertising thrust, was not one that we felt we could deal with. Possibly Mr. Messer, Mr. Dombowsky, are recommending them to the Government of Manitoba as their prime consultants. We don't think that they're the marketing agency we want to deal with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. A couple of clear questions I direct to the minister. Does the minister agree that Canpotex entered into an arrangement with Cord International, giving Cord International the right or authorization to sell potash, and does he agree that a sale was negotiated as evidenced by information in writing from Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation under date November 4, 1985?

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, I could reread the telex to Canpotex from MMTC. I don't see a great deal of point in that. Whether an agreement was signed, it may in fact be the case. I'm sure that's part of what's in front of us. A decision, however, has been by Canpotex on behalf of the potash producers of Saskatchewan, whom they represent, that in fact this organization was not the organization we wanted marketing our product. We felt they were less than reputable. We have not taken up the cause of Cord International. I assume that's the role of the members opposite.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Minister, does the minister deny that Canpotex, by Robert J. Ford, vice-president, marketing, on September 16, 1985, wrote to Cord International, the same Mr. Corral, saying, "We hereby authorize Cord Enterprises International to offer our product on the world market" — in this case up to 600,000 metric tonnes of muriate of potash of Canadian origin? Do you deny this? And do you deny that at least Canpotex felt that Cord International was presumably a proper firm to whom to give an authorization to offer muriate of potash to the tune of 600,000 tonnes?

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, I think that there are some conditions attached to that, as I indicated. In the course of the investigation which followed, Canpotex became convinced that Cord International was not the type of company that they wanted representing them as an agent, in whatever country — in this case, India. I think the facts that I've laid out involving the visit from the RCMP, the fact that they do not have a business address, the fact that they don't have the phones available to pick up phone calls, and, or course, the denial by MMTC, would indicate that this corporation, in fact, was not the type that we certainly would approve of, marketing Saskatchewan products around the world, and consequently no deal was pursued, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. My question is this: does the minister agree that in order to make sales in some markets, notably India, counter-trade has to be offered. Does the minister agree that Cord International proposed to make, and did make, a counter-trade proposal? And does the minister agree that

Canpotex did no counter-trading until short weeks ago after pressure from Cord International and others forced Canpotex to consider counter-trade proposals?

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, once again, the Leader of the Opposition is defending Lou Corral and their very reputable company. If the member believes that a counter-trade deal is put together in a matter of a few minutes or weeks or hours, and that pressure from Cord has anything to do with this announcement of Canpotex's counter-trade deal, he's sadly mistaken. This counter-trade agreement that was announced yesterday, and is a very, I think, progressive step forward, and indicates Canpotex's ability to market potash, the fact that they agreed to look at more than the traditional manner, was stated months and months ago, and in fact we've been corresponding and dealing with MMTC on this specific issue as well as some others that I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition is aware of. Now pressure from Lou Corral or Cord International has absolutely nothing to do with the arrangements that were announced yesterday.

Reduction in Price of Oil

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, in recent months the world price of crude oil has fallen dramatically by something like 55 to 60 per cent, and yet the price which the major oil companies are charging Saskatchewan consumers has fallen nowhere near that amount. Pump prices in Saskatchewan have not fallen 55 to 60 per cent, but less than 5 per cent.

I ask you, Mr. Premier: have you or your Minister of Consumer Affairs asked the big oil companies to explain their pricing practices, or asked them to justify these continuing high pump prices?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have been monitoring the gasoline prices, both rural and urban, in Saskatchewan and other jurisdictions. I have been in contact with the major oil producers and major retailers, whether they are large companies or local co-ops, or whoever.

I can point out that in December of last year the price in Saskatchewan on average was about 42.2 cents a litre. Given any kind of normal discount, which is running around 4 cents, it came up to about 30.7 cents a litre. Today, under the similar circumstances with about a 1 cent discount, it's down to 33 cents in Saskatchewan.

We're looking at price declines on a weekly basis. We're in a situation now where we're following price declines which could put prices in the province of Saskatchewan as low as 29 cents a litre. In the province of Saskatchewan, say about seeding time . . . I have comparisons here — this was day before yesterday — in Winnipeg the Esso full service price was 50.8 cents per litre. In Regina it was 38.9 cents a litre. We're looking at 12 cents a litre lower gasoline in the province of Saskatchewan than we do in our neighbouring province. And that 12 cents a litre here does not include the 21 cents a gallon that the rural people will be picking up on top of it.

So in the province of Saskatchewan the people are picking up an advantage of something like 16 cents a litre above what they'd get in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the Premier gets his numbers from, but I suspect he'd better question his source. I'm not sure even where he gets his gas from, but he gets it from some place where nobody else in Saskatchewan seems to be getting it. May I suggest in my supplementary, Mr. Speaker, that the only people who have gained out of this whole operation are the oil companies.

Is the minister aware, is the Premier aware, that in this province today there is a sharp variance in retail gasoline prices between different regions of Saskatchewan, and can he explain those differences?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, there are differences in gasoline prices. Last week Mohawk was selling it at 36 cents a litre in Regina, and people down the street were selling it at 38.

An Hon. Member: — I thought you said it was 33.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, it is 33 if you give our rebate, okay? When you put the combination together, then you get . . .

Gasoline prices and fuel prices in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are lower than they are any place in Canada. So our surveys have showed Regina has had the lowest priced gasoline any place in the nation, and is certainly a lot lower than it is in Manitoba where they're paying 50 cents a litre. They are lower here than they are in some jurisdictions, and it depends on the competition. If Mohawk goes at 36 cents a litre, other people start to follow. In Melfort the other day they were 26 cents a litre because there was a gas war on. So you're right. Around the province we see places where the price of gasoline is coming down.

Two observations I make, Mr. Speaker. One is: gasoline prices are the lowest in Canada in the province of Saskatchewan and in the city of Regina; and number two, Mr. Speaker, that those advantages are the largest in rural Saskatchewan compared to any other place that you'll find in the nation.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I don't know of anyone in my constituency who qualifies for the so-called rebate which the Premier talks about — nobody. Let me give him a couple of examples — and I ask this as a new question.

Today in Regina you can buy gasoline for 40.3 cents a litre. That's the lowest, Mr. Premier. And while in Swift Current the cheapest prices is 44.1 cents a litre, and in Yorkton it's 45.5 cents a litre, and in Saskatoon it's 44.1 cents a litre. Those are the figures of the price of gas at the pumps today in Saskatchewan.

And I ask you: how you can justify that kind of variance when there is no way that the transportation costs can

justify a difference of 20 cents a gallon between any of these points?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I find it really interesting that the member opposite was finance minister sitting in the Government of Saskatchewan, and if it was still in power today the price would be 50 cents a litre in the province of Saskatchewan, and he knows it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — You had a 20 per cent sliding tax on gasoline all over the province of Saskatchewan, and you can stand there and you can say, what about the price of gasoline? The price of gasoline in Manitoba . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please, order!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the price of gasoline in Manitoba is 40 to 50 cents a gallon more than it is in the province of Saskatchewan, and if you take the rebates that we've brought in, the royalty structure we have, and the fact that \$150 million of savings goes right into the pockets of Saskatchewan consumers . . . They remembered that in '82 and they'll remember it in '86 and '87 and '88 and in 1990, because they know you'd put it back on, and we won't.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, and I wish the Premier would address the question. I ask again, Mr. Speaker: how can the Premier sit in this House and stand up in this House and justify a 20-cent-a-gallon variance at the price of the pumps of gasoline from one part of Saskatchewan to another, through which an awful lot of Saskatchewan consumers are being ripped off by the oil companies which he and his colleagues are protecting? How can he justify that?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite was minister of finance, and he had a bigger discrepancy right here in the province of Saskatchewan due to his government. I mean, he charged people 40 cents a gallon more than they should have paid, and he had a sliding tax, and he would ride with the oil companies right up the top, and he'd blame them and say, oh, it's their fault. He took 20 per cent of it. In the province of Saskatchewan there's no more tax on gasoline, and we have the lowest prices in Canada, and they will continue to be the lowest, and in fact they're going down because of measures that we have taken.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Final supplementary. Mr. Premier, surely, don't you think that you and your government ought to be concerned and make some effort to try to change things when you find that people of this province who are buying gas at the pumps have to pay 20 cents a gallon in some parts of the province more than they're paying other parts of the province. Don't you think you ought to be concerned and that you or your Minister of Consumer Affairs ought to take some action?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the man opposite was

minister of finance and he charged them over 40 cents a gallon more than are being charged now — 40 cents a gallon, that's what he charged them, and year after year he would raise the sliding 20 per cent scale. He still wants to charge them again. If the NDP come back in, the gas tax is going right back on. It goes up another 40 cents a gallon. It'll be 60 cents a litre. That's what they want to do. He's standing there saying . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, there will be no gas tax in the province of Saskatchewan, and this province will have the lowest-priced gasoline as long as I am Premier in this province, because won't tax the people on their gasoline and their energy like people opposite did. We have now got a 40 to 50 cent gallon advantage over Manitoba, and we're going to hang on to it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sveinson: — New question to the Premier of Saskatchewan. Crude oil prices have tumbled throughout the world in the last several months. I think you will agree, Mr. Premier, that the price at the pump in Regina has not tumbled accordingly. Part of the problem is taxes coming out of Ottawa. Your counterparts in Ottawa have refused to recognize that that tax does hurt the people of Regina, and certainly the people of this province. Are you putting any pressure through your government on Ottawa to drop the tax on that gasoline accordingly?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, we have taken the tax off gasoline in the province of Saskatchewan, and we have followed the footsteps of Alberta. The two provinces have the tax off gasoline. We've encouraged all governments to do that. We encouraged the Government of Manitoba to do it. We've encouraged the Government of Ontario to do it. We have encouraged the federal government to do it — to follow our lead.

All I can say is they should follow what we do. They would see the lowest prices in gasoline in any place in this nation right here in the city of Regina as a result of what we've done. So I've encouraged all jurisdictions to do it.

We've listened to people in Ontario saying they don't want to trade with the United States, but people like Bob White are the first guys to say, but I want the price of gasoline in the United States. Sure, they want to go over there and pick it up just like right now, but they don't want to have anything to do with them.

I'll tell you we made the difference here in this province. We know what it means to trade. We know what it means to create economic activity, and we know what it means to reduce taxes for consumers and families in this province. We have in the past, and we will in the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sveinson: — Mr. Premier, what have you done in direct communication with Ottawa requesting Ottawa to lower the tax on gasoline?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I have set the example for the rest of the nation to follow when it comes to tax reductions for families. That's what I've done. I have protected their home against high interest rates. I've cut the taxes on gasoline. I've taken the sales tax off children's clothes. I've taken it off power bills, to reduce that burden of tax on Saskatchewan families.

In gasoline and fuel, the members opposite raised taxes all the time, 20 per cent sliding scale, so what I've done is said, follow me. I didn't just phone them and say look it, I think you should do something about it. Follow the kinds of things that we do in the province of Saskatchewan and you'll be going the right way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sveinson: — With respect to gasoline prices, there is, in fact, a great discrepancy between Preeceville and Regina as it relates to the price at the pumps. That price can only be attributed to the producer of that fuel. Is there any action being undertaken by this government, or anticipated by this government, in forcing the producer to, at least in our rural areas of Saskatchewan, charge a more equitable price for the fuel he sells?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, let me just give the member opposite an idea about what price competition can do. We said in the province of Saskatchewan that we're open for business and we wanted firms to come in here. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, they might . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — As a result of new businesses coming into the city of Regina . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, retail food prices in the city of Regina have dropped 25 per cent because of a little price competition. We said we want to invite food retailers into this province, processors into this province. And do you know what? They're right. They charge different prices. Do you know what? The member from Regina North West might want to hear this. There are different food prices now in the city of Regina. Regina is now lower than . . .

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Construction of Northern Power Line

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the honour, Mr. Speaker, of announcing two important times to this House. The first, Mr. speaker, is an agreement — and the members in northern Saskatchewan might want to listen to this — to build a \$48 million power line from Uranium City to seven northern communities, including Eldorado mine at Rabbit Lake.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — This announcement, Mr. Speaker, is

being made this afternoon by the Deputy Premier, in charge of Saskatchewan Power Corporation, to the people of La Ronge. This project will create approximately 150 jobs, 100 of these being local jobs, during the next two years. These jobs will result from the manufacture of steel for tower structures, the fabrication and welding of this steel, the manufacturing of 1,000 kilometres of electrical conductor, and the transportation of this material to the job site. Other jobs, Mr. Speaker, to be drawn mostly from the local labour market, will require people to undertake environmental studies, surveys for the power line, clearing trees, erecting steel towers, stringing the conductor, and building transmission feeders to the communities.

The communities which will receive the power are the following: Camsell Portage, Uranium City, Fond-du-Lac, Stony Rapids, Black Lake, Rabbit Lake, and Wollaston post. There are approximately 2,600 people living in these communities. These communities, Mr. Speaker, are now served by expensive diesel generator units, and they've had to pay electrical rates that were higher than anybody else in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, when the power line is completed, the families in these villages across northern Saskatchewan will pay the same rates as everybody else in the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the power line will have tremendous social and economic impact on these communities. After months of negotiation between Sask Power and the federal Crown corporation, Eldorado Nuclear Limited, an agreement was reached between the two parties this week. The power line will cover a distance of 340 kilometres and will carry 1,115 volts. The steel towers will be made of steel pipe sections, made into a unique Y formation, and this hopefully will be manufactured right here in Saskatchewan. All the electrical conductors will be made by Canada Wire and Cable at its Weyburn plant, and for this job nearly 800 tonnes of conductor will be required and delivered to the site.

Extension of Electrical Distribution System in Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Devine: — The second announcement, Mr. Speaker, is the following. I also take pleasure in announcing another highly labour-intensive program, which is being undertaken by North Sask Electric Limited of La Ronge, an extension of the distribution system in the province of Saskatchewan.

Starting this year, North Sask Electric will build two power lines, one from Pelican Narrows to Deschambault and Jan Lake areas, and the other is from Smeaton to Little Bear Lake, East Trout Lake and Lower Fishing Lake. The total cost of these two projects is estimated at \$5.4 million. About 800 people living in these communities will benefit from the power lines.

Mr. Speaker, these two announcements confirm the commitment this government has to further enrich and enhance the lives of all people across this province. As the government, our policies and programs over the past

four years prove beyond any doubt the importance we attach to families in rural and urban communities, residents north and south.

Only recently, Mr. Speaker, we have announced our intention to bring individual telephone line service to rural people all across the province to stimulate economic activity in rural areas and to encourage small-business growth in the province. This is further affirmation, Mr. Speaker, of this government's quest to produce a quality of life in Saskatchewan residents anywhere they live, in northern Saskatchewan, southern Saskatchewan, rural and urban.

We are building on the assets of northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. This will tie in the uranium industry, the gold industry, the tourist industry, the agriculture industry and provide for industrial services all across Saskatchewan. And for the first time, really, northern communities and families are going to be given the same benefit as those all across the rest of the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I will add a word or two to what the Premier has said. First with respect to the line from Pelican to Deschambault, and Smeaton to East Bear Lake, lines of that size, sir, and that cost are being built all the time, and if each one was announced in this House, we would not have very much time for other business.

I turn to the other announcement dealing with the construction of a line basically from Uranium City, from the Eldorado generating plant, their dam north of Uranium City, to Wollaston and Rabbit Lake. I was a little surprised to hear that this line will serve Uranium City and that Uranium City was not previously served from that dam. I was mightily surprised to hear that. I think that people in Uranium City, I think will be surprised to hear it since I think that was not the case, sir.

We fully support the provision of electric power in northern Saskatchewan in any way that is most economical, and if it has been determined that this is the most economical way, we have no quarrel with that. We do take some reservations — put some reservations on the Premier's alleged devotion to families.

Mr. Premier, these are the same families, at Camsell Portage, and Fond du Lac, and Stony Rapids, and Black Lake, and Rabbit Lake, and Wollaston — I'll leave out Rabbit Lake since there are virtually no families there — but at Wollaston, and Black Lake, and Stony Rapids and Fond Du Lac, and Camsell Portage — those were the people who were getting the food allowances; those were the people who are a great distance from southern Saskatchewan and needed an allowance to have fresh food on the table; and those are the people to whom you denied the allowance which allowed them to get fresh food on the table. And now you are saying that next year or the year after you may offer them something. Will you show your concern about families in those communities by reinstating the food allowance and giving those families the same opportunity to have fresh food that families in southern Saskatchewan now have?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sveinsson: — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to respond to that for a moment or two. I would hope that isn't all they have, the northern residents of this province. I believe that there is a dramatic shortage of input by this government in northern Saskatchewan, and I hope they come up with ideas that can put food in their mouths and certainly jobs in their homes, because there is a definite problem with unemployment in northern Saskatchewan. And I do give them credit for at least addressing one problem, and that is high energy costs. But there are many others in northern Saskatchewan.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which moved by Mr. Klein, seconded by Mr. Domotor.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, when I left off yesterday, I was speaking in the debate on the Speech from the Throne, or what is being proposed as a Speech from the Throne, but the members of the opposition are finding lacking in a great number of ways.

I say as well, Mr. Speaker, that it is an honour to lead off the debate for the members of the opposition. It's an honour because it sets a tradition in which the lead-off speaker is able to deal with a good number of things that we believe should have been in the throne speech which I must say were sadly lacking.

Before I begin my main remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the mover and seconder of the speech. I think they did a relatively good job, considering what they had to deal with. I think attempting to make a silk purse out of a pig's ear is a little difficult.

I say as well, Mr. Speaker, that I find it interesting that this government, this building of a team that the Premier has been carrying out since 1982, his appointment of 25 people to cabinet — the biggest cabinet in the history of the province — that he keeps for three and a half years, and then when the polls say that there should be 19 in cabinet, unceremoniously dumps six of them, or five at the time, from cabinet — built a team in this manner. Puts 25 in cabinet; when the polls show that that's not a good idea, turfs out five of them.

But I say it's interesting that two of them who had got in no trouble in the House, were doing what some say to be a relatively good job in comparison to the other cabinet ministers — now I'm not sure that that's saying very much — took them out of cabinet.

I find it interesting that this building-a-team operation works in this way, when the tradition is that when you are a newly-elected government you start out with a

relatively small cabinet and, as back-benchers prove themselves, they are appointed to cabinet, and you build.

But I'll tell you, it's just one more indication of why this is a one-term government, because you can't build a province with that kind of an operation that's based solely on polls, to say nothing about the supposed friendships and that, that would exist in a team that was supposed to be running the province.

And I say it's also interesting how little it took to get those two individuals back on side. You kick them out one day, and then you say, we'll let you second and move the Speech from the Throne, and they're right back on the team again. I don't understand these people, but I say I'm not alone. There are a great number of people in this province who no longer understand what this government is doing, what it's about. And I say there's no wonder we're in the trouble and the debt and the unemployment and the high taxes we are, with this crew running the province.

We're in that trouble because we have a government that lacks the leadership and the integrity. And I think that the Premier, in what he did, in turfing these people out of cabinet and then trying to get them back onside, is a perfect example of the lack of leadership that that individual from Estevan has. And that's what we're hearing across the province, and I believe that will be a big part of what the next election is all about.

I would like to say as well, Mr. Speaker, that — and I mentioned it yesterday — this is a historic document. It's a historic document because it is the last throne speech, I believe, that we will be hearing from these people for another 50 years, such as it was the last time they gave a throne speech back in 1934.

Now, Mr. Speaker, at that time we were in a depression. We had a government that was uncaring, that did many of the same things that these people are doing, rather than attack the problems that were wrong in the province with the economy, with the control of wealth being in a few hands.

Do you know what the Anderson government did? — and we can produce clippings, and people who read history know. They attempted to run the election in 1934 by beating up on welfare recipients. Now, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting how history repeats itself.

This government came into the Assembly this spring with an attempt to get an election going. And you'll remember, Mr. Speaker, the debate over putting the SGEU workers back to work. The theory was at that time, if we get a fight going with our employees — our secretaries and those tough people — we can get the farmers and some of the unorganized people to vote for the Conservative Party. And that blew up in their face, and we didn't have an election because it backfired. And the real people, working people, clergy, and those people who care about individuals and families in the province — not mouth the slogans that the Premier does, but believe in people — didn't believe that fighting with your secretaries was a good reason to vote for the Conservative Party. So that didn't work.

So then we have the member from Rosemont who tried to get a fight going with welfare recipients, the next tier of strong people in the province. This is the Conservative Party, the Rambo image, the tough boys — they've got to have a fight. The secretaries and their employees didn't work, so now we'll pick the next group of people to fight with, the welfare recipients in the province.

(1445)

Well I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that that will backfire the same as the other phoney war you attempted to start with your own employees. And the people of Saskatchewan will decide in the next election by doing what they did once before — the only time that a Conservative government has ever called an election — and at that time, the only other time they called an election, they went from a majority government to having not one seat in this legislature, and I say for a good reason.

Because government that is unfair with people, that is that dishonest, when on the one hand you have \$10 million of taxpayers' money for an individual like Peter Pocklington, and on the other hand you have the Minister of Social who makes people come crawling to his door to put food on the table, is not a government that's interested in the families of Saskatchewan.

I want to say as well, before I go on, that this being the last throne speech that we will likely be here in this Assembly, that I want to say that being involved in the opposition, I would suppose many would say, Mr. Speaker, that we would have wanted to win the election in 1982 — and of course we would have liked to — but the experience of being in opposition for four years, if it weren't for the devastation to the province, has in many ways been a positive one.

One of the positive things, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, has been the opportunity to work closely with colleagues who have done what I will say is an incredible job of putting forward ideas, new ideas, of how we can make Saskatchewan a better place to live. And I would like to now say publicly a congratulation to all the members in the opposition, and I believe great things await you after the next election when you form a part of the new Blakeney government.

I say as well — and I see the old Liberal is speaking from his seat again, the member who the Tory party is calling on to pull them out of the slide and the slump they now find themselves in; the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden who has been called on now to put together a budget to try to bail the Tories out, that old Liberal — I say to him that he's going to have a tough time. And after the Manitoba election where your former colleagues have taken a good chunk of the Tory vote, you're going to have an even more difficult time putting together a budget that will bail out this crew of Tories. And I say to him, while I wish him good luck, I don't think he's going to have it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go on to the main issue that people in the province are saying to us that the government isn't dealing with, and that is unemployment. I mentioned yesterday that the unemployment situation in the

province is one that is a personal disaster for a good number of people. And we hear endless number of stories of people laying off workers. Morris Rod-Weeder today announced, I think, 100 people being laid off in the city of Yorkton. Now 100 people in that city will be devastated because for each family that's laid off there you have a factor of probably four others who will be directly affected throughout the system.

We have smaller examples of Robinson stores in any number of towns in rural Saskatchewan — MacLeod's — who are laying people off. Ipsco, laying off hundreds of people.

We have the example now of the one shining start, if you can call it that, in the Conservative administration. It cost \$300 million a year to get those 1,000 jobs. But I say to you, more people have been laid in the oil industry in the last three months than in any other three-month period in the history of the province. Even in that one area where they have all of a sudden become strangely quiet.

And you will remember, Mr. Speaker, that we used to have ministerial announcements about land sales when the mineral rights were sold. And you will remember having to make decisions on whether or not it was a political speech or not, and borderlines, and lengthiness of the reports that were given on the land sales, and the \$30 million that were being garnished from that, in the last session.

Well, interesting that this March when the land sales were not 33 million, but 8 million, there's no ministerial statement. But instead the Premier gets up and talks about a short little power line — an important one, but a short power line — that is being built in northern Saskatchewan. And I say that even in that one area the unemployment that has been created by this government is devastating to a great number of people.

When we look at unemployment, Mr. Speaker, there are examples of other provinces that have done other things. And I refer again to Manitoba where last night the people of that province have said to Howard Pawley, thank you for reducing the unemployment that Sterling Lyon had run up to 11 per cent in 1981. And I use that as an example that when you're giving incentives to create employment, we have two provinces, one with more resources and more ability to create employment, that being Saskatchewan; and Manitoba, where the governments changed about the same time.

In 1981 in the fall, and I remember it well, the Conservative government was turfed out in Manitoba. The unemployment rate was 11 per cent — 11 per cent. In the spring of '82, the NDP government was replaced by the Conservatives. The unemployment rate was about 5 per cent. It was about 5 per cent. What happened in the time period between? Well, in Manitoba, under an NDP government, Howard Pawley, by giving incentives in tax breaks to ordinary people, the unemployment rate went from 11 per cent to 8 per cent. It had been one of the highest in Canada; went to the lowest in Canada. And that is why the election turned around.

Well what happened in Saskatchewan by giving

incentives to oil companies and creating employment in that manner? Well the unemployment rate didn't go down after 1982. It went from 5 per cent to a high of over 9 per cent, by this masterful giving of \$300 million to a few oil companies. And I say to you that the people of the province will reject this idea that you give incentives at the top and take from the people at the bottom to do it. It simply doesn't work. It's been tried many times in many places. And you don't pour the money in at the top, you put it in at the bottom so people and families have more money to spend. The small business will have more products to sell; they will hire more people automatically and you don't need the jiggery-pokery of having people off welfare being trained to paint park benches and cut the branches of trees, the way you people have seen fit to create employment.

And I say to you that that example — that example alone — will be enough to defeat you people, but there are many other reasons. I say to you that in creating employment as well, and getting the economy going, the theory that big business from outside the province is going to come here and somehow magically turn the economy around has been proven wrong in this province a number of times.

The first time was the last time the Conservatives were in power, from 1929 to 1934. The same lines were spoken at that time, that we were going to open the doors to the American entrepreneurs, that they would come from Europe, if only we had a government that believed in big business. And what happened? Well you don't have to spend a long time because your parents and grandparents have told you that between 1929 and 1934 was one of the biggest downturns in the economy of Saskatchewan that this province has ever gone through.

And then, in the 1960s, we got another right-wing government under Ross Thatcher, and he too decided that open for business was the theme that we should be carrying forward, that if you only could get rid of the NDP and CCF at that time, the business would flock in and the economy of the province would flourish. Well what happened between '64 and '71? Well, it was the second biggest downturn in the economy because big business didn't come in, because the profit margins weren't wide enough. And then we had to go through it again between 1982 and 1986.

Big business, unless there's big money, doesn't come to this province — and I say to you, Mr. Speaker, we don't need it. We don't need big business to come here and develop our province. That's not the way that it has ever been done. The way Saskatchewan has developed is by small business, small Saskatchewan business, working people, and the public sector working together to build industry and to build the province.

And I say to you, between 1971 and 1982 there were literally hundreds of small industries, not with hundreds of people working for them, but hundreds of small businesses and industries that came here and developed new products and built short-line equipment. And the list is long and impressive., and it included people like Friggstad Manufacturing and Morris and Schulte and all of those companies that came here, believed in a

competition, the same as all of us do, and they built an industry and an infrastructure in this province.

Well I say to you that that infrastructure and the employment that those people created is in serious jeopardy with a government that believes that outsiders can come in and do a better job, because that's not the way it will be done. And I tell you in all honesty, this attempt to get people like Peter Pocklington to come to our province to bail us out of the trouble we're in is not going to work. It can't work. It never worked in the past and won't work in the future.

I want to say another thing about the process of getting big business to come to the province. You have paid more money to one individual, to get him to come to the province to build something that isn't even needed, than what it would cost to set up 20 or 30 small businesses, family businesses, at the local level. Now you have to explain to me how that makes any sense.

I want to say as well that when you're bringing people in and you're talking about the credibility of individuals, you will have to do better than getting individuals like Peter Pocklington, a former candidate for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party, because believe it or not, there are a few people out there who think that there's a conflict, who think that the getting of \$10 million of taxpayers' money to a former candidate for the leadership of your party, that there's a conflict, that there's some sort of a give-away taking place in return for running for the Conservative Party. I'm not saying that that's what happened, but believe it or not there are people out there who believe that that could be the reason, that possibly Peter Pocklington is being paid using taxpayers' money.

I say that that question is out there and that people, I think, have every reason to be suspicious because the connection is so well defined, Mr. Speaker. I haven't heard one word in this House, in any speech, about defending why Peter Pocklington was brought in to build some slaughtering plants that everyone agrees aren't needed.

(1500)

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn just for a moment to one other area of economic strategy that is baffling to the people of the province, and that is the deficit, a deficit which is still spiralling upward, is now close to \$2 billion, a deficit which is putting many families in the province into a debt situation which they never would have believed they could have been in four short years ago.

Now if you take the families in the province and you divide them by the amount of the deficit, we find that each family with three children now owes to bankers in New York, or to people who purchase bonds, about \$10,000. And families in the province now realize, even those who have their home paid for, owe nothing on their vehicles, and believe themselves to be debt free in 1982, now have an accumulated debt, at the provincial level, of \$10,000 for every family in the province.

I say that this is another, this is yet another reason,

Mr. Speaker, why, at the first opportunity, the people of the province will turn this government out, and I believe for a long time, and I believe justifiably.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn now to another area where people are saying this government should be doing more and where they obviously should be doing more, and where they obviously could be doing more, and that's dealing with their friends in Ottawa. We have heard a great deal about how the Premier of this province is going to exploit his close connection with the federal government. You'll have heard it many times that because he knows Brian Mulroney, and they're close friends in the same political party, how that will help in getting things done.

But I want to say that in watching this process of friendship or kissing cousins working in this province, that I say that somebody is being exploited all right, and it isn't Brian Mulroney, and it isn't eastern Canada; it isn't Ontario and Quebec. The same thing is happening that has happened many times before when we have weak provincial governments.

Now we hear Mulroney talk about how he believes in the federal government's approach to Canada, his vision of Canada. But I say to you, when the distribution of seats is in such a way that the federal government has an agenda which is to keep the seats in Quebec and Ontario in order to maintain power, that when they talk about the national interest, that interest often ends at the Ontario western border and Quebec's eastern border. And I say to Grant Devine that he is not doing enough to protect the interest of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. I would ask the member to not use the names of individuals, but rather to use constituencies or positions.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — There are many other areas in the relationship between Ottawa and the province that I want to deal with, Mr. Speaker, and I say as well, that the member for Estevan, the Premier, when he talked about agriculture last fall in the session that went on, he talked about getting agriculture on the agenda at the first ministers' conference in Halifax — last November, I believe it was — and he went on and on about how this was the first time that agriculture had been discussed at such a meeting.

Now I know the Premier is loose with facts, and here again it's laughable to think that this is the first time that we've ever discussed agriculture at a first ministers' conference. In fact, the number of times that it has been discussed is probably many more than when it wasn't.

But let's see the results of what Mr. Premier got when he went down to Halifax. Well we got the Nielsen task force report on agriculture, the agricultural sector as it will apply to western Canada. And what I would ask of the Premier is this: whether or not he asked, in fact, for the removal of the rebate program on farm fuel. I don't know whether he asked for that or not, but that's what he got.

I wonder, when he was at the meeting in Halifax, if he asked for a 20 per cent increase in crop insurance rates. That's what he got Erik Nielsen and the Prime Minister

when the report came out. They also talked about doing away with the cash advance. They talk about massive abandonment of branch lines in the rail systems, and he also talked about eliminating the Canadian Wheat Board and putting a tax, believe it or not, on grain in storage and cattle in the feedlot.

Now these things will come as a surprise to the farmers in Saskatchewan that this is what is being put forward from the Premier when he goes to the Halifax conference. I don't think the people of the province wanted him to ask for these kind of changes in the structure that have been built up by farmers over the past number of years. And if we look at the federal budget, it's a continuation. Farmers here are being told that no longer will they be allowed a 10 per cent tax credit on the purchase of new equipment, and that will mean literally millions and millions of dollars out of the economy of Saskatchewan and shifted over to the federal government.

They use the example on a combine, a combine which may run \$100,000. That one change in the federal budget will cost that farmer, not as a deduction or depreciation, but will cost the farmer \$10,000 in cash, that one little change that has taken place in the federal budget. The \$100,000 combine will cost that farmer \$10,000 more as a result of the 10 per cent tax credit being taken off — 10 per cent, \$100,000 — that will cost the farmer an extra 10,000 bucks. And I say to do that to farmers when they're already up against the wall is unfair and uncalled for.

So I say, when it comes to asking yourselves who is going to stand up for and fight for the rights of people in Saskatchewan, for the farmers and the working people, for the selling of the resources, I think very clearly the answer is not the present Premier in the Conservative Party, because we believe that the federal government in Ottawa is going to be working hard to keep their support in Quebec and Ontario and doing it at the expense of Saskatchewan and the people who pay taxes here.

Mr. Speaker, there's one other area that we have a great deal of concern about, and I want to talk about it for a short time, and that is the health care in the province of Saskatchewan. Now you know, Mr. Speaker, that we have a proud heritage of developing a health care system in this province that goes back a long ways. And I'm not going to take a great deal of the time of the Assembly in going into the history of how medicare and hospitalization came about, but I think it's important to say that this process was started back in the '40s in the Swift Current health region — 1946, when we set up a pilot project under the Tommy Douglas government, CCF government, which was expanded in a full-fledged health care system by 1962. And it's a heritage that we are proud of, and I think many people, including the nurses in this province, are very concerned about it when they watch it being ripped apart, when they have to go publicly and have press conferences to try to embarrass the government into giving the proper funding so that the patients in the hospitals are not left at risk at the time when nursing staff are not on duty.

And I say to you that in the hearings that we held last week in Regina where nurses and health care givers came out,

and users, senior citizens came to us and told us the stories about what is happening in the province as a result of the Devine government, I say to you that something has to be done — something has to be done.

And I think what has to be done is not a continuation of the PR job that is being done by the Minister of Health. I don't think we need an ad agency to send out his speeches at a cost of \$5,000. I don't think we need expensive ad campaigns in all of the local papers and the dailies that are costing thousands of dollars to make it look like money is being spent. I don't think we need, in this budget, any more moving and shuffling of numbers and areas from other departments into the Department of Health to try to make it look like more money is being spent. And I found it interesting, that after three years of denying that any problem existed, that we had the Minister of Health now announcing that right after the next election he's going to solve the problem that a week ago he said didn't exist. And I say to the people of the province, can you believe what they say when you see what they do? And I say in the area of health the record of this government is not up to par, and for that reason, as well, this government does not deserve to be re-elected, and that we can't afford another four years.

I suppose this PR work that is being done in the area of health is best exemplified by referring to a meeting that the Minister of Health organized in Swift Current last week. He sent out letters to all the administrators of nursing homes and hospitals, and he invited the clergy and nurses, and everyone came to this meeting which cost thousands of dollars. And in talking to some of the administrators afterwards, they said: you know, the minister didn't show up; he didn't come to the meeting.

Now I believe the minister when he says that he was fogged in in Regina. I honestly believe that he couldn't make it to that meeting. I'm not sure why fog would stop you from driving for two hours to Swift Current, but I'll believe that he was fogged in.

But the thing is we have two other cabinet ministers who represent the south-west who could have come to that meeting. We have the minister from Maple Creek and the minister from Swift Current. Now I don't know whether I believe that both of them were sick that day. I don't know whether I believe that story.

But what I do know is that the member from Morse who went to that meeting did not do the job that people expected the Minister of Health to be doing. I don't blame the member from Morse. That's not his job, to be carrying on at the meeting in place of the Minister of Health.

And I say to you that the people who went away from that meeting were terribly disappointed. They realized they had been used for political reasons. And I say to you that the kind of phoniness is one of the reasons, and other reason, why this government will not be back for a second term.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks by saying that I am not in agreement with this throne speech because it lacks credibility. It lacks substance, and it lacks the initiative to solve the major problems of employment,

massive tax increases, and bad administration, and I therefore would have a great deal of difficulty in supporting the throne speech as it now stands.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sandberg: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to stand today on behalf of my city of Saskatoon and particularly to stand on behalf of my constituents in Saskatoon Centre.

We have a great mix in the constituency, young and old, and most ethnic origins of the world are represented there. The down-town area is characterized by many high-rise apartments and condominium complexes. We also have several senior citizens and low-income apartment buildings administered by the Saskatoon Housing Authority. City Park and North Park are older established areas of the city and contain senior citizens and young, working couples with families. Richmond Heights may perhaps be described as containing more professional persons and business people. However, all parts of the Centre constituency represents a good mix. We estimate that senior citizens represent some 20 per cent of the constituency. I'm therefore very much aware of the issues that concern seniors, such as health care and housing.

Mr. Speaker, the senior citizens' heritage grant of up to \$700 per couple is a benefit well deserved by them. And the seniors very much applaud this government's decision to build a new city hospital, and appreciate very much the \$100 million that was added to enhance services in our hospitals and, of course, the more than 500 nursing positions that will be added.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon is very renowned for its quality of life. Our citizens recognize it and feel comfortable in their city. We have publicly-owned river banks and paved biking and jogging trails. We have boating launches and river cruises, excellent theatres, the symphony, museums, and art galleries. We have everything one could expect in a major cosmopolitan area. Our people are warm and friendly, and visitors are always welcome. We're proud to call Saskatoon home.

(1515)

Mr. Speaker, in the last few years Saskatoon has developed into Saskatchewan's commercial and financial centre. I know that soon its citizens will approve a new multi-purpose arena facility. We will then host world-class sporting events, agricultural shows, and cultural events. I'm confident we'll soon host a Canadian curling championship. And it's a fact that the Canada Summer Games will be coming to Saskatoon in 1989. Millions and millions of dollars will be injected into the Saskatoon economy by this new facility.

Saskatoon is a city on the grow. The February issue of the *Saskatchewan Report* magazine listed major projects proposed or under way for Saskatoon in 1986. And that list includes a new city hospital at \$106 million, St. Paul's Hospital expansion at 52 million, expansion to the University Hospital at 30 million.

There are building cranes all over the city of Saskatoon. There will be two new recreation complexes at 6.4 million, a 238-bed nursing home costing 20 million; a new University of Saskatchewan administration building at 5 million; the Circle Park Mall addition at 17 million; SED Systems' new plant will cost 10 million; Intercontinental Packers expansion, \$21 million; and a brand-new agricultural college on the University of Saskatchewan campus costing some 78 million. There are many more listed, and they add up to a whopping \$400 million-plus for the city of Saskatoon in 1986.

Saskatoon is growing and building in 1986, and that adds up to hundreds and hundreds of jobs and economic activity for our people. Mr. Speaker, we all know that economic conditions have been tough over western Canada in 1985; however, Saskatoon enjoyed a healthy economy. The city boasts 8,000 new job positions in 1985, for an 11 per cent annual increase.

Saskatoon's industrial development officer, David Fairlie, says Saskatoon's growth has been fuelled by a large number of plant expansions. Intercontinental Packers' recent expansion announcement and SED System's new \$10 million plant will add to this growth in 1986.

Saskatoon has the lowest per capita civic debt in Canada at \$195, and we can now have friendly feuds with the city of Regina that we are the largest city and the fastest-growing in the province of Saskatchewan at 176,000 persons.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that despite recession, drought, grasshoppers, and what not, Saskatoon continues to grow and prosper. Mayor Cliff Wright even indicates that the long-awaited south, down town redevelopment project may at last get under way. That would mean more jobs and much more business for the city.

Saskatoon boasts one of the finest universities in the land. It is continuing to grow with the recently completed geology building; as I mentioned, a new administrative building on the way; the announcement of this fantastic \$78 million college of Agriculture; and a \$17 million cancer facility just under way; and a \$50 million addition to University Hospital. Some 14,500 students are enrolled in the winter session, so it's indeed a busy place.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon has a fine convention centre in the Centennial Auditorium, and we can offer visitors the sweetest drinking water this side of the Rockies.

Our real estate market is booming. Multiple listing service sales surpassed \$200 million in 1985, and it looks like more of the same for 1986. Real estate people recently told me that they just can't get enough listings in Saskatoon at this time to meet the demand.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon is renowned for its progressive thinkers and leaders and its entrepreneurial spirit. These qualities make our economic future and our social future very attractive.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech of Monday last is the building blocks from which we will continue to build

Saskatchewan. The plan is one of opportunity, of participation, and of protection for our people. Accordingly, home-makers, part-time employees, and employees of small businesses will now be able to build security for old age. I will have more comments on this voluntary Saskatchewan pension plan later.

Small business in my constituency can look forward to new initiatives to provide relief from high interest rates. There will be expansion of the nine and five-eighths per cent interest reduction program on \$50,000 for small businesses.

And, Mr. Speaker, my constituents will be pleased to see five new provincial parks in the province established, including Saskatchewan's first wilderness park. Many Saskatonians enjoy and utilize the parks, both summer and winter. And, as well, these new provincial parks will provide many jobs.

My constituents will also be pleased to see the development of a provincial educational, cultural, and public-interest television network. Education and information service through television and the computer is definitely the trend of the future.

Improved financial assistance will be made available to post-secondary students, and this is good news for those who have to finance their advanced education.

Opportunities '86 will provide some 8,500 summer jobs for students. Coupled with the federal program, some 11,000 students will have work this summer.

The industrial incentives program has been very successful in the past, and it, therefore, will be extended.

And housing construction programs will be introduced. This will mean jobs and homes for young families.

Extended training programs for those on social assistance will help those people get out from under the yoke of welfare.

And, Mr. Speaker, the tourism industry is expanding under this government, and we intend to intensify these programs for the benefits of our hotels, resorts, fishing camp operators, and the like.

The Speech from the Throne indicates the venture capital corporation program will be expanded and the youth entrepreneur program will be continued. We believe that business people will respond to these business opportunities and that Saskatchewan women, who in recent years have played a major role in the development of new small business, will take advantage of them to expand their participation in the business life of the province.

And I was pleased to encourage the Premier to move the Department of Science and Technology to Saskatoon. That will mean added jobs for our city. I believe in decentralization of government if it is done at the least cost.

Moving the crop insurance corporation to Melville, the

water corporation to Moose Jaw, and the agriculture credit corporation to Swift Current will inject some added economic activity into those communities.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated earlier that I wanted to come back to the announcement regarding a real first for Saskatchewan and that is the Saskatchewan pension plan. I'm very excited by this plan and so are many of my constituents. I've talked to several of them over the past few days, and they like the idea very much. Participation in the pension plan is voluntary. It will offer additional security to people who are unable to participate in employer-sponsored retirement programs. It will be available to home-makers, part-time employees, and employees of small-business firms. This initiative is a milestone in the history of Saskatchewan, and I commend my constituents and the people of Saskatchewan who suggested it to us.

Premier Devine and my colleagues in this legislature know it will provide security for many folks who are unable to avail themselves of a pension plan. This pension plan will be the answer for home-makers, urban and farm wives, working women and mothers, part-time employees in the workplace all over Saskatchewan, and employees of small firms that are unable to provide pension plans. So this is great news, Mr. Speaker, and I know the people of Saskatchewan agree.

The seniors in my constituency are also applauding the new seniors' heritage grant. It's the best program ever for seniors in this province, and it puts some \$40 million into seniors' hands. It'll help pay the rent, property tax, prescription fees, and other expenses that seniors incur. Senior couples under the \$25,000 annual income level can gain some \$700.

Mr. Speaker, I'm enthused over some recent economic statistics compiled by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. Retail sales in the province were up 7.7 per cent from 1984 to 1985. That's 4.3 billion in 1984 to 4.6 billion in '85 in volume. That's an increase of some \$300 million over the year.

And vehicle dealers had reason to grin in 1985. Sales of all new cars, trucks and buses increased some 10.9 per cent from 1984 to 1985.

Construction figures for the year show an increase in activity compared to 1984. In 1984, dwelling unit starts numbered 3,456. In 1985, the number goes to 4,111. That's a 19 per cent increase. Mr. Speaker, 1985 was a year of growth for Saskatchewan in these sectors. I know we can expect added growth in 1986.

I sadly acknowledge that 1985 was a tough year on many of our farmers. Drought, grasshoppers, and in some areas too much moisture, caused great problems. High input costs and low prices for their product has put many farmers in a bind.

But, Mr. Speaker, Premier Devine and this government can be well proud of the measures that we took to help farmers, and I pray the good Lord will at least give our drought-stricken farmers a good harvest this year. We all in this province, either directly or indirectly, depend on

agriculture for our economic well-being.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a small farm community and a family of eight children. We knew some tough times but like most Saskatchewan families, we knew that by hard work our lot would improve. Saskatchewan families have that spirit. The men and women of this government have that spirit. This throne speech demonstrates that spirit of growing and building and improving Saskatchewan for all people, and I heartily endorse it.

I highly commend our government for the opportunities, the participation, and the protection that has been generated by my government in the last four years. This new plan will carry these goals on with the well-being of all Saskatchewan citizens as our top priority.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to begin my remarks by pointing out a number of things that I believe are pertinent to the discussion that we have here today and the discussion relating to the Speech from the Throne that was read by His Honour on Monday.

I want to evaluate it and place a degree of compassion and a sense of unity in relation to that speech, that I thought it exemplified, and the dimension that I thought was transferred by His Honour in discussing it with us. He presented a number of things that I think were important. It showed a degree of vision and hope and a sense of stability and security. Those four things, I believe, Mr. Speaker, were demonstrated by the Speech from the Throne, but there are also other things that I think that lead up to that that I want to point out.

We go to our travels around the province in the past few months and I want to point out a number of things in relation to that. The cabinet committee on farm input costs, as they travelled around, had a lot of sense and feel for the direction that agriculture in Saskatchewan is supposed to go, and I think it's kind of mentioned in a report that was written by Dale Eisler on Wednesday, March 12th in the Melfort Journal.

I want to quote a couple of comments here before I begin. "Based on that yardstick," of economic development in agriculture, the Premier of Saskatchewan and his government "has done more than any other provincial administration ever. The Tories have literally poured more than \$1 billion into farmers pockets in the province. By the government's own calculation, on average each farm in Saskatchewan will receive almost \$36,000 in various government subsidies or support programs."

Just repeating that — the Tories have poured in a million dollars, or a billion dollars into the province, into the farmers' pockets, and they have done it in a unique way. And I'm going to talk about that a little later, but I want to continue from there and explain why I believe agriculture in Saskatchewan is important.

We have seen evidence of that in the kind of programs that the government has put forward. We see that on an ongoing basis. We see that in a number of things we've

already done, in The Farm Land Security Act. We wanted to establish a sense of stability and security, as I mentioned earlier. How can you have a vision and hope when you have no security or stability?

(1530)

We went through to a farm counselling and assistance program where we provide assistance to farmers who have economic and financial difficulty. And I want to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that as I've travelled around and visited various credit agencies, like credit unions and bank managers, I have come to the conclusion, and they have come to the conclusion, that is a very important function of this government.

And why? Because the people who are obtaining credit very often do not know how to manage it and put it into place. And these farmers telling other farmers how to handle that is a step in the right direction, and the people have continually said that to me.

Another program that we initiated, and it is in line with doing things for all of Saskatchewan — the livestock cash advance program that we initiated. And that, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, is a very important program in relation to production in this province. I noticed the bull sale in Regina here the other day had some record prices in relation to their cattle and livestock, and I believe that it is a beginning to put into place the kind of feeling that people in agriculture have about themselves and about the very fact that they have some hope and some stability in their market.

I just want to put into perspective what it has done for my constituency. I took the time to put that into perspective, and in my constituency, just on the livestock cash advance alone, Mr. Speaker, the value is just about \$6 million. And it comes to about \$9,700 for every family, for every applicant in my constituency. And I think that that's important. I think that's an interest-free cash advance to these farmers who have livestock, to give them impetus to do the things that they feel they have to do.

Another important area where we have universality, and it's the area that Mr. Eisler was talking about in his column, about a billion dollars in the farmer's pocket, is the production loan program. And I think that it is a very important part of unifying agriculture in this province.

We had a program for livestock that dealt with all the livestock or the beef in Saskatchewan and I believe that that's very important. I think it's important because it ties the farmer in Cumberland House together with the farmer in Consul or the one in Meadow Lake with the one in Estevan. I believe that that's important because it provides the same benefit and adds continuity to the whole agricultural program. The livestock cash advance does that and also the production loan program.

In my constituency we have about \$43 million put out by the agricultural credit corporation in dealing with that. I just wanted to say about the agricultural credit corporation and its move to Swift Current, I believe that that's a step in the right direction and I'm looking forward

to having that as an integral part of the community when that's done.

We have talked today to some extent about the oil royalty holiday, and to some extent about the oil royalty rebate that farmers are going to get in this province. And as we travelled around the past month we saw a lot of farmers really concerned about the fuel prices. I believe that because of that concern that was expressed by the farmers in relation to that, I think that's why we're seeing the prices of the product come down. Every one of us would like to have it come down more rapidly, but I think as it comes down you have to recognize some very important function — that we do not, I believe, want to jeopardize the upgrader in this province. We do not want to jeopardize any of the upgraders in this province.

As I travelled through the western side of my constituency I noticed this to a large extent, that the farmers would tell me that what you need to have is stability in the oil sector so that we can provide oil to the people of Saskatchewan from the oil within Saskatchewan. Right now, 95 per cent of the energy that is used by the people of Saskatchewan comes from Alberta and we pay a royalty charge to the Alberta government of 7.4 cents a litre.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is a part of the problem that we are facing today. For some many years in the '70s, we had no imagination, no vision to developing the kind of stability that we needed in the energy sector. Nobody wanted to build an upgrader in Saskatchewan and nobody proceeded to do it. And therefore today when we have the program of NewGrade in Regina here, it's going to be a very stabilizing force in the south-west part of Saskatchewan in particular, because roughly 25,000 barrels a day will flow into the upgrader here and it will take up about 65 per cent of the total being produced there today. I think that that is a very big benefit to the people of my constituency, and also as it relates to the oil royalty. That 4.6 cents a litre is going to be quite an asset.

I just want to go on to another area where we have had development and that's in the area of water development in the south-west. When Sask Water Corporation was initiated, in Swift Current we had, for example, one person dealing with water and water-related problems, and it became a real critical issue in the south-west because demand was there, the necessity was there for more staffing. Today we have 13 people there working together, not only to provide assistance to the water development as it relates to irrigation, but also to the use by urban municipalities and small urbans in developing sewer and water projects. And I know that this has been an asset to the communities around in my constituency, and that's a very important feature that this 13 people provide to the area that I live in.

They have initiated discussions with various towns and villages about their sewage needs, about their water needs. And I think it's an extremely important feature in dealing with how water is handled, how it's developed in the south-west, because in the last two years we had a lot of stress on those kinds of functions because of the drought. And I appreciate the fact that this government has addressed those areas.

The next area that I want to deal with, Mr. Speaker, is the farm purchase program. We have heard a lot about this in the last three years, and I want to add to it a very important part, and recognize that it has done a lot for me and for the people of my constituency.

The total rebates paid and interest rates paid to the people of my constituency represent about \$1.5 million, and that, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, is a very important function. I think it's been a benefit. The annual payment back is about \$4,000, and I think that for the 340 people in my constituency, I think that's an important feature.

I want to go next to something that has been discussed and was initiated in the throne speech and the discussion relating to grasshopper control. We had a number of very serious outbreaks in the south-west and the minister of Agriculture at the time, the member from Weyburn, played an extremely important role in developing the kind of things that were required to put some money into place. And if you have an idea that it cost a lot on your farm, it cost a lot generally, because that chemical was moved in here from the United States and from Europe at no cost to agriculture. And over and above that, the municipality that I live in had the benefit of about 3-mill payment made to them, and I believe that that is a significant contribution to the farmers in my constituency. The value of 3 mills is, in my opinion, fairly substantial.

The south-west has had a drought for the last two years and the people in the province are aware of that. And I'd just like to say that there were a number of programs developed in conjunction with the federal government that relate to that, and one was moving livestock from the south-west into northern parts of the province, and the people of my constituency have appreciated it. I've had some 25 farmers from my constituency who benefited from that. They were able to move their cattle and livestock into the northern part of the province. But of particular benefit to the south-west was the livestock drought assistance program that related directly to the \$45 paid in 1984 and the \$60 paid in 1985. And it was a direct benefit to the people of Saskatchewan.

And I would like to say that the people who have benefited have really appreciated that. I've heard many, many comments. But the thing that they appreciated the most, Mr. Speaker, was the fact that they were able to gain access to that program by a very simplified method of applying for it. They had a good program, and they put it together, and it benefited my constituency in the two years by something like \$4 million. And I appreciate that, and I want to thank the government for that.

We have had a number of programs in relation to the cattle, the livestock. We have gone into another one, Mr. Speaker, that relates to publishing farm input costs and providing surveys for agriculture to find out really what the chemical costs, the fertilizer costs, are in the province of Saskatchewan. And I think that that's an important feature in the development of a better agriculture climate for the farmers of Saskatchewan.

Natural gas has been a very important part in my constituency, and I want to thank the minister responsible

for Sask Power, and the government, for providing that kind of program into my constituency. In looking at it, viewing it from the people who benefit, I think it can be best said by a gentleman I visited in Bateman, Saskatchewan. And he told me, he said, you know, it isn't the farming community who gets the biggest benefit from it; it's the small towns, the small towns who never had it before.

Like in the town of Bateman, he said, there's two churches, there's two community halls, and a skating rink. And of those five places the contributions and the continually making that community a viable community, those 60 families who are involved in keeping that community alive . . . And the benefit is extremely important to them because they reduce their cost in the amount of money they have to collect from those individuals to maintain that community in there. And that is an extremely important feature.

For an example, he said, in the skating rink, instead of three months a year, they can go to four and a half months a year where they can keep that rink open. And for me, Mr. Speaker, that proves one point: that the natural gas program is an extremely important function in my constituency and for the farmers of Saskatchewan, and I know that the people really feel that it is an important part. As a matter of fact, the south-west region probably has a sign-up of at least three years in advance to get that gas into their homes.

(1545)

I was speaking to a member of the Hutterite Colony from the Val Marie area, and they reduced their costs by 50 per cent in relation to the propane that they were using, in relating that to natural gas. And I think that that is a measure of giving the farmer the benefit of lowering his cost in relation to his farming practices, and I think it's important.

We heard talk already about the buried line service in the power and telephones, and I think those are two really important areas that we have had some discussion about already and a program developed, and I think it's extremely important that we look at those kinds of things in determining . . . reducing the cost, reducing the hazard, that is involved in some of these things like overhead lines on farms and that sort of thing. I think it's important that we take a serious look at those things.

The rural line service in telephones — I just want to make another point about that — the rural line service in the telephones is very important, especially to the small communities, the small towns, because of the restriction that was placed upon them by the amount of people that they had to have in their communities in order to have private line service. And I think that the small businesses in those small communities are especially going to benefit from this program and I know that they're going to be happy with it. In thinking about it, as it was announced to the SARM convention, the people there at that time were particularly pleased by the fact that this government was going to take a look at that. And I think we need

to commend the people from both Sask Power and SaskTel for their imagination and for their progressive kind of attitudes in relation to developing a better program.

One of the things that we ran into, Mr. Deputy Speaker, during our travel around the province, was the fact that school boards and R.M.s, hospital boards, made presentations about their problems in dealing with liability insurance. We had representation from businesses regarding that, and I believe that what we are proposing to do as addressed in the throne speech is a step in the right direction. We have the necessity of providing some security, as I said when I started, about some stability and security in the vision of the people of Saskatchewan, and that is one way that we're going to be doing it — the security that they need because they have a problem with liability insurance.

I want to just point out a number of other things that I think are important, and they deal with health care.

The Saskatoon Agreement II, protecting us from extra billing, I believe was an important step forward in this province. And I believe that the Minister of Health, the member from Indian Head, I think led the attack in providing a better and more stable health care program for the people of Saskatchewan. And it is extremely important, I think, that we recognize this because the people who were receiving the extra billing were those people who were seniors. And I think the seniors gained an extremely important benefit by this protection against extra billing because it was the things that were related to those things that were breaking down — like not being able to see that well or hear that well — those are the kinds of things that were receiving the extra billing. And that's the kind of thing, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we, in the province, recognize and then provided a way to accommodate that.

I think that we need to address something that is very important here, and that is the reduction of sales tax on a number of commodities, like the utilities. Many people did not recognize that on their power bills that the 5 per cent sales tax went off. And I believe that that is a very important thing to remember.

I also want to point out that the farm fuel was another place where we're rebating more than what we're receiving, as far as the royalties that they're using on the gas that they're using. As I said before, the farm fuels are going to be rebated 4.6 cents a litre.

We don't even consume our own gas. The oil that is produced in Saskatchewan is not refined in Saskatchewan, and therefore we have a very serious problem when world commodities, as oil, go down. We have a direct impact. And do you know where it impacts most? It impacts most in the south-west part of Saskatchewan. And that's because the kind of crude that is there is the kind of crude that's going to be refined in this new, great upgrader. I think that it is very important that we continue to place an importance and put into people's minds the importance of that upgrader in Regina here. It is a benefit to all of the people of Saskatchewan, and we'll finally be able to use our own crude oil.

I want to point out a couple of things in education that are, I believe, important, and they deal first of all with the education development fund and its involvement in my community. And a lot of the people in the various school boards there have indicated to me that they are in support of the kind of programs that have been initiated by the education development fund. And they are supportive of the ideas that we have developed because they have had an access into the kind of programs that they want to see initiated.

I also am very pleased that in the past three years I've been able to have two schools built in my constituency, and one is being built right now. It's going to be started in the next few days, and that's the school at Neville.

It's a sorry condition when you have children who are not able to learn because of allergies in some of the places that they've had to learn in that school. And I believe that the new school there is going to add a great deal of community spirit. And like I said at the beginning, it's going to add stability to that community. It's also going to say to those children, we have a vision, we have a hope, we have a place to go.

The key thing in those two things, in those two schools, is that the community has involved itself in putting together a program, together with the school board, a community centre for that development. And I am very pleased that the Minister of Culture and Recreation has provided some grants for that. I'm also pleased that the federal government is going to provide some grants to the Neville school for some of that.

And they have, on the latest discussions together with them, they've got \$15,000 to go out of about 65,000 that they had to collect. And I believe for an area of the province where they had drought, grasshoppers probably just as intense as anywhere else, I think it's a credit to that community.

There are a couple of things that I'd like to deal with as it relates to an overall view and things that we're planning on doing and why I agree with the Speech from the Throne — why I'm going to be in support of it: the amendments to the livestock investment tax credit in relation to hog production, continuation of the agriculture development fund — I think it's an important item — enhanced assistance to irrigation and other water conservation projects, efforts to expand traditional markets for grain.

We have to learn to develop an attitude that will provide for the greatest amount of advantage to our grain producer and our livestock producers in this province. We have to work together to provide the best economic benefit to all of us. And that's the kind of thing that we're looking at there.

Application of venture capital corporations to agriculture — we've had some feedlots going into this, and I think it's a step in the right direction. I think a key to all of this in agriculture, and we heard this time after time after time in our hearings across the province, the key to the development of agriculture in the province is agriculture

research.

And the member from Saskatoon Centre pointed out some of the things that Saskatoon is going to benefit. Saskatoon is going to benefit an awful lot from having a research centre in agriculture developed in the city of Saskatoon.

And that has a high priority by this government. It's a high priority by the people of Saskatchewan. They've recognized the importance of it, and I believe that it is a way that we tie together the sense of responsibility that the people of Saskatchewan have for the economy of Saskatchewan. If that's agriculture and its relationship to urban people, then that's what it has to be. Because it takes a very strong, sensitive urban person who is a researcher in an agriculture college, or the geology college, to put a development into agriculture that is going to be feasible, workable, and have the dimension of going some place in this province.

And I think that that is one that we work together in this province to tie it all together. As I said before, when we travel around, research was one of the most important areas. It was identified at each of the meetings that we were at. And I think it's extremely important.

The final thing that I want to say in relation to the throne speech has to do with the Minister of Health and his program of development of our seniors' forums in the province. Mention was made of it earlier from the member from Shaunavon, and I just want to say that the people in the south-west really appreciated that the Minister of Health would take the time to initiate that kind of a program.

Dealing with various areas in the province like P.A., Yorkton, and other areas where these forums were held, these health clinics where administrators from hospitals, administrators of home care programs, nurses, and all the cross section of people who help people in our health communities, where they gather together to share some of their ideas, was a very important learning session, not only for the people that came, but also for the Department of Health, as they went there to look and observe.

I think one of the most important things is this: that this government believes that seniors are an important and integral part of this society here, but that we're also doing something about it.

In my constituency, I want to point to two things that they've done already. One is they have put together 19 refurbishing beds in one nursing home which was absolutely necessary. We did that in the early part of the term of office that we were in, and in 1987 and '88 we're going to establish an integrated facility in the town of Cabri.

Now the town of Cabri has worked — and I know they've worked since 1975 — to get some senior citizens' care facility in that town. And I know that the people there, the hospital board has been trying and trying and trying. They finally see a hope. They see some light at the end of the tunnel in relation to the home care problems, senior problems in establishing an integrated facility together

with a hospital in the town of Cabri.

They are looking forward to that. They've already started their consultation process together with the Minister of Health, and I believe that that's a very important feature of the program that has been sponsored by the Department of Health, and I want to thank the minister for his caring attitude.

The member from Shaunavon also indicated that the Minister of Health was remiss and negligent in not attending, and I just want to say that didn't dampen the sense of co-operation and the sense of warmth and responsibility that was evident at that meeting that we had there. Over 500 people attended, and as a conclusion, a member from the council at Cabri indicated that it was an important function and it should happen again. And I believe that in order to put the record straight, that the people of Saskatchewan want to be in a position where they can tell government officials what they would like and that's what that program was doing.

I want to just conclude by saying one more thing as it relates to agriculture, and going back to the article that was written by Mr. Eisler, and I just want to finish off with that. It says:

Combined with an array of other support programs, this government has done a great deal to support agriculture. Compared to the rather meagre effort of the former NDP government, the Tories have been far more sensitive to farmers . . .

And I believe that it is for a very simple reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that reason is that we care, we understand, and they that they get a listening ear when we go around to the various parts of this province.

(1600)

We have done that in various areas. We have done that as it relates to water. We did that when we got elected. We have done that in relation to education. We've done that in relation to health. We've done that in relation to agriculture and in just our recent tour would indicate to me that people care, that we care, and that we want to do something about it. I will be supporting the throne speech and I am very pleased to have been able to speak to it and been provided that opportunity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't know if that was a prophecy that you thought I was moving my seat or if perhaps you confused me with my very much taller but not as good looking or intelligent colleague from The Battlefords.

Well, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for allowing me the opportunity to participate and I'm pleased to be able to stand here and take my place both as the MLA for Turtleford, which is more important to me, and secondly, as a Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources in the present Conservative government.

Firstly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to reply in my role as Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources. I'd like to elaborate briefly on some exciting new developments in the provincial parks system which the people of Saskatchewan can look forward to in the near future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our provincial parks make a special contribution to Saskatchewan. They provide opportunities for Saskatchewan residents and visitors alike to appreciate our natural and historic heritage and to enjoy a wide range of recreational activities. They are important to our life-style and they do make a significant contribution to the provincial economy. Visits to our 17 present provincial parks generate economic activity worth approximately \$30 million annually.

And during this sitting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be introducing our new parks Act. I will be proposing the establishment of five new provincial parks, including the province's first wilderness park. I will also be proposing the official designation of nine historic parks as provincial parks. As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the new parks Act will establish a classification system which will categorize provincial parks as historic, natural environment, recreation, or wilderness parks. This new Act will also provide a mechanism for setting aside and protecting lands for future park status.

In keeping with favourable public response to the white paper on the new parks Act proposals, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government will continue to involve the citizens of Saskatchewan and the private sector in planning and developing one of Canada's finest parks systems right here in Saskatchewan.

As I said earlier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to participate in the throne speech and to be able to outline that type of activity. In fact, it gave me great pleasure to hear this session's throne speech, and reflect on how many sensible programs and initiatives outlined in it have had a positive impact on my home constituency of Turtleford. In particular, the Progressive Conservative government's \$300 million commitment to upgrade medical facilities has had a very visible impact in my constituency.

I have had the pleasure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I may say the honour, to return to my constituency over the last four years to participate in openings and sod turnings for several new special care facilities for the elderly — a new 30-bed special care home at Big River; a brand new nursing home facility in Spiritwood; and a new special care facility to be integrated into the hospital at Leoville.

It gives me extreme satisfaction, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to have played a part in bringing these services to my constituency — services to the elderly which were denied to them by the previous administration which had, in fact, placed a freeze on nursing home construction. In nine years, the previous government built only 245 nursing home units, while in three years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government has built 688 new nursing home units and are providing 1,500 new special care beds over a five-year period.

The Progressive Conservative government has banned extra billings by doctors. As well, the Minister of Health recently announced a further \$100 million for improved staffing and equipment in hospitals and special care homes. I fail to understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how any member of the opposition in this House can attack the record of the Progressive Conservative government as it relates to health care without blushing.

The Progressive Conservative government recognizes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the contribution which senior citizens have made and are making to this province. Consequently, the Devine government feels they deserve better than the treatment they received under the previous socialist administration.

One of the first actions of the Devine government was to increase the supplement to the low-income senior citizens. We doubled the supplement for single, low-income earners and increased the supplement 66 per cent for couples. In addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on New Year's Day, Premier Grant Devine announced a senior citizens' heritage program which gives lower- and middle-income seniors an appreciation grant of up to \$700.

As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, improved housing for seniors is another Progressive Conservative government priority. In the past four years, new senior citizen housing units have been constructed in Debden, Edam, Glaslyn, Medstead, and Spiritwood in the constituency of Turtleford.

To further improve the quality of life for seniors, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a \$20 million senior citizens' home repair program has been implemented by the Devine government. In my constituency almost 500 senior citizen householders have received close to \$450,000 in home repair grants. In addition, in the past four years our Progressive Conservative government has contributed close to \$60,000 towards private senior citizens groups in 11 communities in the Turtleford constituency.

As a member of the legislature for Turtleford and as a former educator, I have been extremely pleased to see many improvements to educational facilities and programs in my constituency under the Progressive Conservative government. Two new schools in Spiritwood, a major school expansion in Edam, and improvements to schools in Turtleford, Shell Lake, and Livelong have been undertaken over the past four years.

Since 1982, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the total provincial commitment to these capital projects has been over \$2 million in the Turtleford constituency alone. As well, school divisions in the Turtleford constituency have received operating grants totalling more than \$45 million at the end of 1985.

While on the subject of education, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must mention the \$150 million education development fund which is allowing school districts to implement educational projects which they have developed to meet specific needs in their schools. A good example in my constituency is a grant for French education approved for the school in Debden.

Over the last four years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the constituency of Turtleford has benefited from numerous highway and road improvements. Highways No. 12, No. 303, No. 24, and No. 3, and many grid roads have been improved for the safety and convenience of local residents. I would like to point out that almost \$17 million has been expended by the Progressive Conservative government in the Turtleford constituency alone on road construction and maintenance, and this hardly constitutes neglect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as some hon. members of the opposition are fond of claiming.

I'd like to turn to something that I consider one of the most exciting and innovative announcements that was contained in the throne speech, and I refer to the issue of pensions. A Saskatchewan pension plan to provide pensions to those who cannot currently qualify: people such as home-makers, part-time workers, small-business employees. Only a visionary Progressive Conservative government under the leadership of Grant Devine could conceive the idea, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and then make it work.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to comment on the most serious issue in my constituency, farming. The farmers in my constituency have not recently been plagued with drought or with grasshoppers, as their colleagues and neighbours to the south have been. For the last four years they've not even been plagued with a socialist government or socialist representation in the legislature. And they're thankful for these blessings.

Nevertheless, from talking to the farmers and livestock producers in my constituency, I know they, like the rest of the province's farmers, are being seriously threatened by falling commodity prices and rising input costs. As their member of the legislature, I am proud that the Devine government is working to find solutions to their problems instead of waiting around to buy up their farm when they're forced to sell, as a certain socialist government has been known to do.

The farmers in my constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, can face 1986 with hope, knowing they can get their next crop planted with the help of loans at 6 per cent interest. In the few short months since the production loan program was announced by the Minister of Agriculture, our Premier, 650 farmers in the constituency of Turtleford have applied for over \$13 million in low-interest loans averaging about \$20,000 per farmer. That's \$13 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker — \$13 million worth of economic activity in the Turtleford constituency.

In addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from August 1985 to February 1986, 533 livestock producers in the constituency of Turtleford have applied for almost \$5.7 million in repayable, interest-free cash advances to improve their cash flow and help them maintain their herds. Similarly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, hog producers in my constituency will benefit from an interest-free cash advance program, as well as an 8 per cent interest rate on new loans for livestock.

These Progressive Conservative initiatives to expand the livestock sector make good sense for my constituency

and for the agricultural sector as a whole. The Progressive Conservative government recognizes that Saskatchewan's economy is dependent upon agriculture, but realizes that diversification will strengthen the agricultural sector and help stabilize the province's economy. It's called not putting all your eggs in one basket.

To be fair, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the previous socialist administration does believe in a variation of that old adage. Their philosophy, however, was: everyone put all their eggs in our basket, and then we'll decide how they should be shared.

Farmers in my constituency, as in others, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will soon have their input costs reduced through a 4.6 cent per litre or 21 cent per gallon rebate on the full amount of qualifying fuels used in their farm operations. This is 10 cents more per gallon than the rebate offered by the previous government, which also enforced a maximum pay-out of \$300. In total the Saskatchewan farm economy will receive \$42 million from revenues collected from oil royalties, revenue which would not have been available had the previous administration remained to finish off the oil industry.

(1615)

Another program introduced by the Progressive Conservative government to help reduce operating costs to farmers and fuel costs to residents in our towns and village, is a program my constituents had awaited for a long time. The people living in Turtleford constituency, and the rest of rural Saskatchewan, waited 11 years under the previous government to be hooked up to SaskPower's natural gas distribution network. Well, I'm pleased to report, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in 1986 almost 500 new families and businesses in my constituency will be enjoying the benefits of natural gas service.

In addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all rural telephone customers can now look forward to individual line service. Work will begin immediately on the five-year, \$264 million project recently announced by Premier Grant Devine.

A primary objective of our Progressive Conservative government, Mr. Speaker, is the perpetuation of the family farm. Every time our farm purchase program helps a new farmer start to grow, the Progressive Conservative members of this House feel like proud fathers and mothers. I'm happy to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that over the past three years 133 young farmers in my own constituency of Turtleford have been able to start up or expand their farms, knowing they are protected from sudden increases in interest rates.

Now the Progressive Conservative government knows, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that its production loan program, farm fuel rebate program, drought assistance, cattle and hog incentives, revisions to the agricultural credit corporation, etc., etc., will not in themselves ensure the future of the family farm. They are designed, however, to help farmers hold down input costs while together, government and farmers together develop long-term solutions.

The special cabinet committee on farm input costs has listened to the concerns and ideas of farmers across the province. As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have listened to the concerns and ideas of farmers in my constituency. Through agricultural policies developed with input from the people they most affect, through continued support of the agricultural sector in tough times, and through a continued commitment to agricultural research and development, the Progressive Conservative government is helping to build a more prosperous future for all Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud to be a Conservative. I am proud to belong to a party of vision, a party of hope, and a party that displays innovation, and I'm proud to be a member of the government of a gentleman of the calibre of our Premier, Grant Devine. And I also want to reiterate a commitment I made on election night 1982 to my constituents. I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's constituency first, constituency foremost, and it's constituency always. And I'd like to think that I'm the same person I was four years ago, maybe a little older, hopefully a little wiser; certainly a little wiser in the ways and evils of socialism — I can say that much.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as long as I am the member for the Turtleford constituency, I'll be in here. I'll be in the offices of this building, and I'll be in the corners of this province, and I'll be in my seat, scratching, kicking, firing, and . . . (inaudible) . . . to do my very level best for the people of Turtleford. Thank you, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Caswell: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. May I first give leave to introduce guests?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — You have leave.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mrs. Caswell: — I'm very excited today to welcome to the legislature exchange students for the College of L-i-m-o-i-l-o-u, which may be something like Limoilou, or something from Quebec. I'm not too bilingual, but I know a little Cree.

And I certainly welcome them as they're visiting Kelsey Institute, a fine institute in my riding. They are accompanied by Eileen Cote of Limoilou and Cliff Adolph of Kelsey. Don't I say Kelsey well?

And we certainly welcome them. We know they're having an enjoyable time, and it was very interesting to meet with them for pictures, and most of them were taller than the MLA.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Monsieur le President, et nos amis de la langue francaise, bonjour et bienvenue ici aujourd'hui. J'espere que vous allez enjouir de votre visite a la Legislature. Bienvenue.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Mrs. Caswell: — Thank you, member from Turtleford. It's nice to know you speak three languages.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today I want to talk a little bit about why we've been doing the kinds of things we've been doing for four years, and what we want to accomplish in the next four years. I think that it's very important, as we look at a new session and a new throne speech, to start looking back at the fundamentals of why we are here.

I am here first of all, personally, and I'd like to remind myself and other people of this, that in 1979, and there is an article about this fellow who won the Tory leadership race, and it was in *The Commentator*, a newspaper in Saskatoon. This young man won, and he said in his speech that he would put God first, the family second, and politics third.

I was so impressed by that that I phoned up to get a Tory membership. And I remember when I came home and I told my husband I was a Tory now, and he thought that was kind of strange. But after, we had a little talk and I convinced him that it was a good idea. And I think that that kind of philosophy that was from the beginning, when the Premier won his leadership race in 1979, is still exemplified in Saskatchewan today.

And then I think of something I heard as we were going into that first election in 1982, that somebody, a fellow from the riding of Souris-Cannington, had a quote in his speech, and he sent me a copy of the speech in which he said that someone called Roy Romanow had said that Saskatchewan is a sociological experiment. And I phoned up the PC caucus office and I said, is it really true that they would call Saskatchewan a sociological experiment? And indeed they verified this was actually true. Recently I read the quote in a history book by a University of Saskatchewan professor, in which he is adulated as a fine and noble person.

And I'd like to talk about sociological experiments, that I thought the people are not experimented on without their wish. I thought that we were here to be governed in the province, not to be guinea-pigs in a sociological laboratory. And I think it is very important to realize that what we've had since the conception of the CCF is a group of people who are not involved so much in the process of politics and in the democratic process, but those who want to be change agents in a society which radically will change the role and function of the economy, the family, justice, the church, the institutions, and our banking system, and everything else.

While involved in the — how shall I say it — while doing active sociological research in the left in the 1970s and '71, I noticed that really they saw the whole political process as a means to an end. It was not a means to, well, I want to govern; I want to be. But I want to create a sociological revolution. And many people with their radical, very intense views saw that they could hitch onto the NDP to create the kind of society they wanted.

And you think, well that's old stuff; we're no longer talking about that kind of thing. But I look back at the kinds of things that the NDP have been saying lately, and I really wonder if they have really changed from 1933 when they passed the Regina Manifesto.

And you think, well what has the Regina Manifesto got to do with the Conservative throne speech? I think what we have to realize: what's the alternative, and is the alternative still the way it always was?

I just want to read Section 13 — and perhaps I've done this before, but I think it's time, you know, to remember what these people are about. This is in social justice, and what they want, from the Regina Manifesto:

The establishment of a commission of psychiatrists, psychologists, socially minded jurists and social workers, to deal with all matters pertaining to crime and punishment and the general administration of law, in order to humanize the law and to bring it into harmony with the needs of the people.

And it goes on to talk about: we would get rid of the idea of crime and punishment, of legal justice; and we would have a society ruled by the psychologists and the social workers — people who, I'm sure, have their place in society. I question if they have their place as rulers.

It goes on to talk about: we will tax people as an intermediate measure until we no longer have any time for taxation because the state will be controlling all the economy. It talks about: there will be social ownership of virtually everything. And most important, it says it will not rest until the capitalist . . .

We aim to replace the present capitalist system, with its inherent injustice and inhumanity, by a social order from which the domination and exploitation of one class by another will be eliminated; in which economic planning will supersede unregulated private enterprise and competition; and in which genuine, democratic self-government, based upon economic equality, will be possible. The present order is marked by glaring inequalities of wealth and opportunity, by chaotic waste and instability; and in an age of plenty, condemns a great mass of the people to poverty and insecurity.

So we had a look at this as a constant virulent attack on capitalism. And what is capitalism? It is an economic system that is probably the worst in the world except for all the others. It is a system by which people can freely buy and sell without government interfering, disrupting, causing shortages. It is a system by which people in their economic base can create an independent, free base with other values such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech and otherwise.

And we have to say, well . . . I remember the member from Shaunavon was saying, well, we're all for competition and we're all for this and yet they extol the value of their CCF roots, and they talk about how wonderful they are,

and you know, I think in society that some of the worst things have been done by the people with the best intentions in the world.

I'm sure that many of the leaders of the CCF, such as J.S. Woodsworth, who wanted research done on Ukrainians and idiots and is recorded in, *A Prophet and Politics*, and these people who wanted this kind of society were sincere men, were dedicated men, were certainly vigilant men and committed men and full of great energy and great sacrifice to accomplish what they wanted. I believe that their intentions were good, but their results are terrible . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

As my colleague from Turtleford just volunteered, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." I heard that Karl Marx said that, although I haven't checked exactly.

And we see what has happened in Saskatchewan when we had more and more socialism, that indeed we were having two classes of society. There was a class of society of those people the taxpayers, and another class of society called the government, which more and more was not the elected members, but the bureaucracy. And the bureaucracy, although many of them were sincere and were just doing a job, but more and more power was enhanced into the hands of a bureaucracy which usually were more well paid than most people in society, that had more perks than most people in society, that had access to the ear of government, like the average person did not.

(1630)

We had a class of society where you had . . . People in government could buy up a business if they thought it should be nationalized, and it was essentially expropriation because they had the power to legislate and the power to tax. We had a class of society of Crown corporations created that did not have to go by the usual rules in the market-place but could continually have an invested position so that they could compete with the others to the point that others would not be there. And we had a class of people that made it very difficult for people to live in Saskatchewan, and that's why many of them left.

And you say, well, you know, we have changed all that. And some of those Crown corporations are still going, and they are functioning well and we are proud of some of the resources and we still have a great deal of bureaucracy, although we've decreased it very much, and we still have all kinds of things of the socialist legacy.

But I think the thing is to realize there is a very clear difference about what we are talking about when we as Conservatives want to help people. Everybody, every politician is for jobs. And that might mean jobs, but it's a question of how are those jobs going to be created.

Are they going to be created by more and more government intervention in the economy by make-work projects, by useless edifices to NDP or CCF politicians of the past, or unnecessary wealthy edifices that could be simple and efficient buildings? Or are they going to be created by allowing the private sector to create more jobs and to have a climate in which people want to build and

create, which people want to expand their businesses, which people want to keep preserving and strengthening their family business to hire more people.

Every politician will always say, we're for jobs, but it's vastly different of what those jobs might mean. Will those jobs mean more and more government in the economy?

The NDP candidate in Westmount has said that we need more government aggressiveness in the economy. We need the government to become more and more involved in the economy. And of course along with more government involvement, we have more and more powerful unions. And I think that it's more important to realize that whereas the unions certainly have their place and where the unions certainly serve a useful role in society, that if it's a union in the private sector, they know there is limits to how much you ask. There are limits to what burden you put on the owner of the business because eventually that business will close down. But the unions in the public sector headed by irresponsible union leaders can ask for the sky and create all kinds of problems in society because they know that they are competing with the public purse, and if the public doesn't like what they're going to ask, then the government will be forced to raise taxes.

And so when we talk about raising taxes, no one likes to raise taxes; then I ask you, first of all, not to raise taxes. The elected representatives must be in control of the government so that they can be in control of expenditure of salaries. And when there are people who complain, oh, you may have not cut off this tax or that tax, the socialists never said, but curb those union leaders who are asking for too much and are making impossible demands on the public purse which will come out of the people in Westmount who many of them do not have expensive government jobs. They have their own small business or they are working for Intercon, the St. Paul's Hospital, not at the kind of wages you get in Regina working for the government.

Now while I'm saying these things, I most certainly do not in any way want to attack those people in government who are responsible, who know their places, to carry out the policy and wishes of the elected representatives, and who most certainly do not deserve the type of union leadership they have.

But I think it's very important when we talk about taxes that the first thing we have to do is to control our government and to make sure the elected representatives, not union leaders, are in control. And for this reason I most certainly support the actions that the Minister of Justice did in January, and I most certainly support the kind of responsible attitude we have towards government and to who is in control.

When I ran in '82, I had little cards. I didn't have much money for a lot of literature, but I had little cards printed up. And they said, "Stop bureaucracy, restore democracy." And I think that's a very important issue. And I was very, very pleased in the throne speech when we talk about that the public must have access to government decisions and access to input in government decisions.

We must reverse the trend of the government intervening more and more into the families of Saskatchewan, but turn it around that the individual and the family has more input into the policies and decisions of government. In other words, there's no place for government in the living-room or the bedroom of the nation, but there most certainly is place in government for the average citizen who wants to say something to his politician, who wants to give them information.

I think any system eventually has control of information that is stifling to that system. We need fresh ideas. We need new approaches. We need people who have a compelling interest to research new ideas, to look at things in a different angle. And we're hearing more and more people saying things like: there's a lot of important issues about the family that need to be discussed, that need to be evaluated. And that needs to have input.

There are people who are saying . . . I'm so pleased that the government is going out and having these consultation processes in health and such things, so that we can talk to the government — consistently all over Saskatchewan. Although I spend most of my time in Westmount, I hear the message that what people want is to have input in the government. They want to be able to say that their MLA is working for them. And indeed the people of Westmount are my boss and they can hire and fire me. I hope they'll rehire me, and I'll work hard at convincing them. But I have not ever forgotten that they are the boss. And if they don't like what I'm doing, then I'm afraid to say; then it's their verdict. And that is the way it should be. I appreciate that and respect that.

I'm so thankful that many Westmount people see me as someone who goes to bat for them, and I'm sorry the many times that I've not been able to solve the problems that they wanted. But I welcome their input and their concerns.

We go back to the NDP and their sociological experiment. They experimented in agriculture; they wanted state control of lands. They experimented in the economy; they drove people out — the young, the active, the educated. They experimented in education and health and decided that we would take money to buy uranium mines which another group of NDPers want to close down. And they experimented with the family and saw that they could put oppressive laws and taxation on the family, and they could indiscriminately give people welfare and it would not harm the family.

One can only conclude after this sociological experiment, the experiment has failed; the ideas are old. We now know that welfare harms the family more than anything else — the welfare mentality, not that a family gets temporary help. We now know that government cannot run roughshod over the rights of people and have people living in freedom and integrity.

We see now the kind of things that the NDP have done, that their old new-deal philosophy — their philosophy that more government the better — is gone. And it takes a long, long time to change it.

I'm sure that the NDP has always had people who said, you're not going fast enough; you're not making changes in the sociological direction fast enough; you haven't bought up enough mines and businesses. We still have convenience stores that are owned by private-sector people. You haven't done enough to pass the radical feminist agenda and have day care in every school and in every corner. You haven't done enough to free women from the family. And I'm sure there was many, many of . . . and there still is people . . . The NDP were saying you haven't done it enough.

But let me tell you folks, that when you look back in 1933 and you see the kind of things that the CCF-NDP set up, and you see what they were up to, the only conclusion that you can draw is that they did accomplish much of their goals, and if they may have not done it in five minutes or in five years, but they relentlessly kept their agenda and they pushed their agenda through election after election and we were the guinea-pigs in their sociological experiment.

And so for those friends, and perhaps occasionally I've said it myself, that the Tories could have changed things a little faster. Remember, it took the NDP 40 years to experiment on us. It took Saskatchewan, 1982, to tell the NDP we didn't appreciate the experiment, and we want a government that is responsive to average people on average issues. We want government who's responsive to the idea that a housewife, for example, should have a pension; that being a home-maker is a noble profession and that we have a right to the kind of security for our career choice as other people have who've chosen a career force outside the home.

We want people who . . . that part-time workers, for example, would have a pension, and I appreciate and I would like to hear more input into what the people of Saskatchewan think of Premier Devine's idea for a pension.

But most importantly, I invite my constituents, and indeed the rest of the province, to tell us what they want, to become part of government, to become part of the decision-making process, and to give us their ideas and their freshness. And I appreciate that in four years some people have said, you haven't done enough on some issues, but I can assure you the NDP keep their promises. And if you think that we're a little slow in keeping our promises for freedom, for family issues, for any other issue, remember the NDP with their sociological agenda will eventually keep their promise, and that's the alternative.

For this reason, I most certainly support the throne speech in its main, and I am so proud to be an MLA of part of the Devine team.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muller: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think every once in a while we have to stop and compare things, compare their record against our record. We've been here four years now and I think that maybe we should stop and look back a little, and then we can look ahead. We always have to look into the future. It's sometimes

difficult to look into the future, but somebody has to take the initiative and do this, to see where we're going and what's going to happen.

Looking back, I think we have to look to the last dying years of the NDP government and their old socialistic ideas. They were more interested in their family of Crown corporations than they were interested in real families. I remember the last few dying years of their administration. They advertised their Crown corporations, their family of Crown corporations, that nobody could compete with. They were non-competitive and yet they paid tax dollars to advertise these Crown corporations on television and radio and newspapers.

(1645)

The real families that they forgot about were the home owners and the farmers. They allowed interest rates to run rampant. I've talked to many people in my constituency in the last four years . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. I'm going to ask for the members in the back row to cut the chatter. It's very difficult to hear in the Chamber.

Mr. Muller: — I've talked to many of my constituents in the last four years, Mr. Speaker, and now some of the impact is coming to them of what happened to them in 1980 and '81. I've seen some notes come back to farmers that they signed in 1980 and 1981 to buy farm equipment and granaries. When they originally signed those notes, they signed those notes at 24 per cent floating interest. I can document that, and I don't think that's the kind of interest rates that farmers can afford to pay. If the interest rates wouldn't have fell, those farmers today would be out of business. In fact that's part of the problem from the late 1970s and the early 1980s, was those high interest rates on agriculture and housing.

The housing . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please!

Mr. Muller: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The housing interest rates in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the mortgage interest rates in those years were 17, 18, 19 per cent. How were people ever going to pay for their houses? I think it was a very positive move by the Conservative government to guarantee those interest rates at 13.25 per cent.

I also think that they've made some very positive moves in agricultural interest rates. Agricultural and urban people have to live together. They're dependent on each other in this province. The interest rates movement in the agricultural sector with interest-free loans on livestock, the 6 per cent money on \$25 an acre on cultivated acreage, is certainly a very important thing to the agricultural sector. They know now what they're going to have to pay for interest rates over the long term. They can plan their business. They don't have to work on a floating rate like they did under the former administration. I've talked to many farmers. And some of the fellows here sitting on my right are also farmers, and I'm sure that they're using the low-interest rate programs that have

been put forward by this government.

An Hon. Member: Never!

Mr. Muller: — The member from Assiniboia with his new Lincoln says he's not using our 6 per cent money but I'm sure that he probably is.

But I think these kinds of programs are important. People have to know what they're paying. They have to be able to plan ahead. Agriculture isn't a short-term business; it's a long term. And in order to run a long-term business you have to have long-term financing, and long-term financing and low interest rates is certainly important to Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan farmers. I certainly support our government.

Also we put into effect in 1982 the 8 per cent money for the purchase of farm land; told the people exactly how many years that this was going to be in place. So before they went out and purchased land they could plan. They knew exactly what it was going to cost them each year as they were in this program. The first five years it would be 8 per cent; the next five years it would be 12 per cent or whatever the going rate was at that time, and which we all know now that the going rate is less than what we had projected. But at least it was long-term, permanent interest rates that they knew they could deal with.

And certainly this has put some stability back into the agricultural sector as did the 13.25 per cent mortgages put stability back into the housing sector, so people knew what they were going to pay when they were buying a house.

Another very positive move that we've done is we've come up with a 21 cents a gallon on farm fuels. Farmers know that they will get a rebate of 21 cents a gallon on their farm fuels this spring. They know what they're going to have to pay. They know what it's going to cost to put their crop in.

In 1978, looking back to the former administration, they took off 3 cents a gallon — 3 cents. But right after the election they cancelled that program. They thought that they didn't need it; they were re-elected. They thought they'd never lose power in this province and certainly 1982 they found out different.

An Hon. Member: — '87's coming.

Mr. Muller: — '87's coming — yes it is. But I think these kinds of programs are certainly important. This farmers' royalty program . . . The refund of 21 cents a gallon is certainly going to help, I know on our farm, to put that crop in this spring. I'm sure it will help every other farmer in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that there's lots of other members that have all kinds of ideas about what we should be doing and what we should have done. And we've certainly learned a lot in the last four years; we've been coming out with positive programs.

I'm sure there's lots of other members that want to get up and support the throne speech. I will certainly be

supporting the throne speech and I thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Petersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure today that I rise to my foot to stand in front of you and speak on the throne speech. It's a little bit of a pain here, but I'll get by. I'm used to pain. I've been looking at the opposition members for the last four years and if there is anything more painful than that I haven't found it yet.

There's one thing that the people of Saskatchewan can be assured of and that's that our government will try to keep them from enduring pain, the pain of high interest rates, the pain of seeing families move out and stay away.

Instead, we're trying to turn that around, Mr. Speaker, and we've done it over the past four years. And the throne speech outlines numerous new activities that'll continue to do it from now, 10 years from now, 20 years from now, for as long as we're in government.

My constituency, Mr. Speaker, is largely agricultural-based. Agriculture is king. I've got a number of small communities — 1,200, 1,500 in each town. And in those towns, Mr. Speaker, you're seeing something really interesting. We've got new schools, renovations taking place to others, nursing home additions, new nursing homes being built, new highways being built. And I'd like to list some of them out, Mr. Speaker, and then take it from there, and show how the new, innovative approaches in this throne speech will add further to that.

In the town of Wadena, for example, Mr. Speaker, we're building a new elementary school. and that new elementary school, Mr. Speaker, is needed because we've got more students than we've ever had before. More people are moving into the community to start businesses. More young farmers are coming home and starting raise families. We're looking ahead.

Over 5,000 young farmers in Saskatchewan have taken advantage of our farm purchase program, our 8 per cent money, and they're building around the town of Wadena. They're building new homes on their farms, and they're providing the infrastructure for small businesses to survive. We've had over 40 new businesses start up in the town of Wadena in the last three years.

The Premier was out there the other day and had a chance to travel around and talk to some of those people. And you know what they're saying? They're saying: we like your government; keep doing what you're doing; keep on. And we plan to. Many of those businesses wouldn't have been started without our nine and five-eighths interest program, Mr. Speaker.

Under the NDP, what did they have ? Nothing, not a darn thing. With us, they not only have got the support of a government that's bringing farmers back and providing customers for them, they've got nine and five-eighths interest money.

And so things are a little tough in some places. This

government, Mr. Speaker, has acted in the past to prevent farmers from going under. It's rough out there — commodity prices are down; world markets are slack; nature hasn't been kind to us. Our Farm Land Security Act, Mr. Speaker, has kept many, many farmers on the land who otherwise may not have been able to. And it doesn't just simply go out and say, whoop, you can't foreclose. It's a situation, Mr. Speaker, where we provide consultation and an intermediary between the farmer and the financial institution that has found themselves in a position where they have no other choice except to try to move on that farm.

Our cash advances, Mr. Speaker, have been new and innovative approaches. For the first time, livestock producers can get a cash advance as well as the grain producer, interest free. Mr. Speaker, that's something totally new and different. And that's kept farmers on those farms and in those small towns.

Presently, Mr. Speaker, farmers are getting ready to put their spring crop in. There is 6 per cent money available, \$25 an acre. Forty-five thousand farmers have taken that up, Mr. Speaker. Forty-five thousand farmers are getting 6 per cent money.

The previous speaker talked about what it was like in 1980 and '81 — 24 per cent interest rates, and the government of that time did nothing. This government is providing assistance and is providing help for those people.

And you can hear the members of the opposition talk about, Tory times are tough times; and boy, things were good when were in. But you know, Mr. Speaker, they had 11 years of government and I never saw a private line come into my house. I had a party line. If I wanted to discuss business on the phone I had 42 other people listening to me. That may be exaggerating, Mr. Speaker, but it is possible. When I talk to people, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency, they're glad we've got a private line now, they're glad that they going to have a private line coming in there. Because when I talk to them they no longer will have to say, well, we've got to watch what I say because an NDP might be listening to me here. Private lines, Mr. Speaker, are definitely a boon and not just for that reason.

Technology, Mr. Speaker, is becoming increasingly more important out in the agricultural sector. Computers, access to information, access to markets.

And while we're talking about markets, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out that during the NDP regime marketing was not allowed to be taught. People were not supposed to make up their own minds. Good Heavens! I mean, if you wanted to have a program put on to discuss accounting or farm management, unless it was based on the Regina Manifesto, it wasn't allowed. There was no funding provided.

Mr. Speaker, we're finding a great lack of technology out there today. There's a vacuum there. People need it, people want it, and during the 11 years the NDP were in, they did nothing to prepare people for our modern age of technology. Nothing! Well, Mr. Speaker, we're moving

towards that modern age of technology faster and faster and private lines will help bring that about.

We talk about highways, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned in my opening remarks that they were building highways in my constituency . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Highway 38 from Kelvington to Kuroki is being built. That particular piece of road was never improved under the NDP. Mr. Speaker, Kelvington is a town that's facing a difficult, difficult situation. The possibility of having its rail line disappear looms in the horizon.

During the NDP regime another one of my towns lost its railroad — the town of Wishart in my constituency. And not one NDP member went out to fight that rail line abandonment hearing. Not one. They weren't there.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I was at Kelvington. I fought the rail line abandonment hearing and at least we got a stay of execution. But in case, in case someone in their wisdom decides to remove that railroad or the elevator companies decide to pull out, I'm making sure and this government is making sure that the farmers will have decent roads to at least haul their grain to market on. And that's why that particular highway is being built. Again, something that was never done under the NDP.

Talking about nursing homes, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency there have been several announcements in the past year with regard to nursing homes. A couple of them are yet to be built. We presently have 12 beds that are being constructed at Rose Valley. Ten new beds are being constructed at Foam Lake, and 10 beds were done at Kelvington. The town of Wadena is engaged in consultation with the Department of Health in an attempt to come to an agreement on the size of the structure that will be built there. That, Mr. Speaker, is a new innovation too — consulting with people, talking to people, working with them. Under the NDP somebody walked out from the department and said, thou shalt have this, and bang — that was it. Nobody was ever consulted, because they believe in big governments, centralized governments. Big brother knows best.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I like to work with the people in my constituency, and I think they appreciate the consultative approach. Further . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. It being 5 o'clock this House now stands adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 p.m.