

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Clerk: — I hereby present and lay on the Table a petition on behalf of Ms. Zazelenchuk — Of Orest Olekshy, Phillip Eriksson, and Dennis Pehach, of the city of Saskatoon, in the province of Saskatchewan.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Shand Power Plant

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the Deputy Premier. And my question is this: will the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the Deputy Premier . . . my question is this: will the minister undertake to table today in this Assembly all studies, both economic and environmental, prepared by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation prior to your decision to proceed with the \$500 million Shand power plant project? Will you table that documentation? If so, when might we expect to get it? If not, why would you not table it?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I think those kinds of questions are more properly directed in Crown Corporations Committee and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Isn't that a wonderful vehicle that you folks invented way back when?

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that those questions are more appropriately directed into Crown Corporations Committee. And while you're directing them, you might also direct some questions as to the mining studies that were done at Coronach, and the decisions that were made by your administration when they developed the mine in Coronach.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman, I direct a question to the minister in charge of Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Mr. Minister, I am not asking about what may have happened in some past year, which is the function of the Crown Corporations Committee. I am asking about the decisions on which you based your decision to construct the Shand plant. I'm asking about the recent announcement of the Shand plant and the studies on which you based that decision.

My short question is this: do you have studies which support the decision to go for Shand rather than any other option? If you have those studies, will you make them public? And if not, why not?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The short answer, Mr. Speaker, is: management at Sask Power obviously made their decisions based on information that was available to them, and I expect that there were engineering studies, etc., etc., etc., and I expect that the basis for those decisions will be obvious to all in due course.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What I am asking about is whether or not the power users have got the best deal? That is what we want to know, and we want, not the minister's assurances, but the engineer's studies and the analyst's studies which will show that this is the least-cost option. I ask you again, Mr. Minister, do such studies exist, and if so, will you make them available? And if not, why not?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I'm positive, Mr. Speaker, that Sask Power management would not be making decisions that weren't, number one, based on fact, and number two, Mr. Speaker, decisions that weren't the best deal for Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, I can give the Leader of the Opposition the assurance that the briefings that were given to me and others by management of Sask Power would show that there is very little difference in the economics of Coronach over Shand — very little — a matter of nickels, I might say.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the Shand project had some other benefits that would flow from it, not the least of which was a savings of \$82 million that would come to power because of a belief that technology is just over the horizon that would not require this \$82 million scrubber to be part of the Coronach installation.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, there is opportunity for water management — for irrigation, for recreation, for industrial water — in the south-east corner. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the people in south-east Saskatchewan who pay power rates are in favour of this project. And, Mr. Speaker, that's contrast to the people of Saskatchewan's view of members opposite who want to stop the bacon plant in North Battleford, who want to stop the Shand project and the Rafferty project and the Alameda project. They want to stop the Weyerhaeuser deal. We're for building in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They are the people who want to tear it down.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Minister. You say that you have no doubt that the decision was based upon facts, and I have no doubt you're right. What I want to know is whether they were economic facts, environmental facts, or political facts? And if they were economic facts and environmental facts, why won't you put them on the Table? And if you won't put them on the Table, aren't I entitled to believe that they weren't environmental or economic, but political facts.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I expect that you would say that anyway, just as you tell a different story in the country as it relates to your oil royalty story. You have a different story for the folks of Estevan than you do for the people in Regina or the people of Prince Albert or wherever. So I expect you will say whatever you want to say no matter what's presented or put before you.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the project is based on, not only economic fact, but on co-operation between

governments across the border, between town and country, between Crown and private. It's based, Mr. Speaker, on an abundance of common sense. It works. It's respected. It's popular, and, as I say, so is the bacon plant, so is the Weyerhaeuser deal, and also are all of those other things that the NDP would like to tear down.

The NDP, Mr. Speaker, they really are a little sensitive. They see us as successful in building Saskatchewan, and they don't like that, Mr. Speaker, so they're a little sensitive, and I can understand why.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Speaker, a supplemental to the Deputy Premier, the minister in charge of Sask Power. Is the minister aware of the comments that have been made by SPC's chief engineer, Mr. Roy Smith, where he told the news media that SPC hopes to reduce the sulphur dioxide emissions from the project, the Shand power plant, by injecting lime into the burning process, and he says if this is successful it would avoid the cost of the scrubbers at the Shand plant. He says that tests have been conducted at the Boundary Dam station — indicate that the process will work.

Can the minister — and will he table those test results that have been done, later today, and if not why will you not, in fact, table those?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I think I can get those test results. I'll have to check with the management at power. There have been quite a few tests done on Estevan coal and Coronach coal as it relates to lime injection of fluidized lime, or combustion bed, or some of those other technical things that I don't know anything about. And not all of the tests have been done in Canada. A lot of them have been done in some American research facilities and utilities down there. I don't know how quickly I can get those test results, but I'm quite sure I can get them for the hon. member.

Mr. Koskie: — A new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, your chief engineer tells reporters, and I quote: "If it works, Shand will be the first plant to use such a process in North America. If some reason it doesn't, then Sask Power could be forced to construct scrubbers." So I say, Mr. Minister, you have ruled out a third unit at Coronach, in large part, because you claim that to install the scrubbers would cost additional money to control the sulphur dioxide emission, but now your own chief engineer is admitting that only — there is a hope to avoid having to put in scrubbers at the plant down at Shand.

And so what I'm saying to you, Mr. Minister, can you . . . you must have them and should be able to give us a firm commitment that you will, in fact, provide us with the details of the testing as to the feasibility of the alternate method.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I hate to call into question the accuracy of that particular article. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that there will be no requirement for scrubbers at the Shand project. The testing that has been going on, as I recall, would indicate that the chemistry of the coal at Estevan lends itself to the lime injection

technology, whereas the chemistry of the coal at Coronach does not. I expect that the scrubber he's talking about is the scrubber that would be associated with the Coronach project. However, I can't speak for the chief engineer. But I remember, Mr. Speaker, when I was being briefed on this particular project, that the chief engineer was not talking as had been reported in that particular article.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, a supplement to the minister in charge of Sask Power. And I want to ask the minister about comments made by the former president of the PC party and the man now heading up the project in Estevan and trying to get the Premier re-elected in a tough seat, George Hill. The quote that I read from in the *Star-Phoenix* of this past week indicates:

Politics dictated that Sask Power consider an Estevan location for its proposed new 500 million power plant, a high-ranking Conservative official admits — (referring to George Hill).

Now I would ask you, Mr. Minister, whether or not you can guarantee the power users in the province that this little project to try to get a desperate Premier re-elected isn't going to cost the taxpayers and power users thousands of dollars per family over the next 20 years?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — As it relates to the cost, Mr. Speaker, of this particular project and the burden that it would place on the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you this, that the decisions based on the economics at Sask Power, I will stand by, as will management of Sask Power stand by.

This is not just a power generating facility. It is a recreation facility; it is a tourism and industrial and agriculture . . . all of those things are a part of the opportunity that we are capturing here, Mr. Speaker. And I would say that the cost, the cost of those opportunities, Mr. Speaker, will be very, very beneficial to all Saskatchewan people over the long haul, and the cost in no way will come close to Crazy Al's discount store and all of the promises that we've heard over . . .

I'm just quoting from a newspaper article, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's almost as credible as the one that he's quoting from.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the minister. Mr. Minister, you will remember the ill-fated night in 1980 when the now member from Estevan was defeated in a by-election. And I want to ask you the question, Mr. Minister: is this not a desperate attempt by the campaign manager, George Hill, in Estevan, to try to get that individual re-elected in using taxpayers' money?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, you will remember, you will remember no doubt, the ill-fated night in 1982 when the people of Saskatchewan blew those guys out of the office and intend that they should stay out of office for all time, Mr. Speaker, and I expect that's exactly what will happen.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Conflict of Interest Guide-lines

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Premier, and it deals with the recent public comments made by the member from Prince Albert — the hon. member from Prince Albert — the one that recently . . . well, the member from Prince Albert.

In the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* of yesterday, the MLA is quoted as saying that he is looking forward to reinvesting in the Redberry Lake resort development, because he says he had a chat with you and you've promised him that the new conflict of interest guide-lines for the MLA will allow such an investment.

So I'm asking you, Mr. Premier: can you tell the Assembly exactly what promises you made to induce that member to run again, and can you confirm that the conflict of interest guide-lines will indeed be so loose that the MLAs and legislative secretaries will be able to become involved in the business activities which they have preferred government knowledge, inside track on?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that the guide-lines that will be produced for the province of Saskatchewan will be tighter than they are today for elected officials.

Mr. Koskie: — Supplement, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, you've had almost a year now, and you had the embarrassment of one of your members in your caucus which you suspended as a legislative secretary. Why have you been sitting on your hands and not brought forth the conflict of interest and filed them with the legislature so that we could review them, so any doubt of further involvement and conflict, as being started up by the members as he indicates that he is going to do — why haven't you brought forth the conflict of interest?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the guide-lines will be tabled in the very near future, perhaps within the next couple of days.

Mr. Koskie: — Will the Premier state categorically whether or not his new conflict of interest guide-lines will allow the member of Prince Albert, as he has indicated, the right to invest in and to lobby on behalf of a tourist resort development where the government is directly involved, at the Redberry Lake? Are you saying that you have discussed it with the member from Prince Albert, and that you and he have an agreement that if he's re-elected after the next election, that he can go ahead and use the inside information and reinvest in Redberry developments? Is that what you're saying?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I have no agreements with any members of the legislature on either side of the House with respect to guide-lines. The new guide-lines will be put into place, and when they're there, everybody will be subject to the same rules.

Cost of Government Advertising

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a

question to the Premier and it deals with the public accounts of 1984 and 1985 which were recently, although very belatedly, tabled. Those accounts show that your government paid out more than \$8.5 million to two advertising firms in that year: Dome Advertising and Roberts & Poole Communications. And that's not your total government advertising bill, Mr. Premier. It's just the payments to your two main advertising agencies from government departments — \$8.5 million from government departments alone. That means that advertising by the Crown corporations will at least double that figure to about \$17 million in that year of 1984, 1985.

And I ask you, Mr. Premier: how do you justify spending \$17 million a year on government advertising?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I'll confirm the numbers; I don't have them with me. But I will say that the advertising that we do with respect, say, for example, Lights on for Life, is designed to save lives, as opposed to advertising the power corporation or SGI or a Crown corporation to say that you must purchase from a monopoly. And that's the kind of things that people in 1982 said we don't want any more of. But they said, if it has to do with education, it has to do with opportunities, it's information or safety, that's the kinds of things that government should do.

The other day I believe that the Deputy Premier was asked a question with respect to education programs and a brochure we had out and government advertising. A brochure. Do you know what? People read that brochure, and they got the address, and they got the telephone number where they can apply for new jobs in Opportunities '86, and the kinds of information you should have.

Now when you design a brochure like that, you want people to read it and you want young people to have those opportunities. When you want to make sure that people can drive in safety, particularly on thousands and thousands of miles of road here in Saskatchewan, Lights on for Life deserves to have advertising. And we're proud of that and will continue to have that kind of advertising because it informs people and it saves lives. It also saves the taxpayers money because there's less accidents.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I don't need the Premier to confirm it. It's confirmed in here, the *Public Accounts* which were tabled. There's no doubt about that. It's clear. It's his own public accounts of his government.

Is he trying to tell this House that he can justify the expenditure of \$17 million somehow for things like "Lights on for Life"? I want to ask him: what about the advertising that was done in the pamphlet that was mailed out to farmers, strictly for political purposes?

And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, in my supplementary question, how can the Premier justify the kind of political advertising which we have seen in 1984-85 to the tune of \$17 million while the Premier promised in the campaign of 1982 — very sincerely, I might add — "We will cease

all advertising for Crown corporations except advertising which promotes specific productions and programs offered by the corporation where a monopoly does not exist." Can the Premier explain why he has failed to keep that promise?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, what monopoly is there? We have programs for farmers that are going to provide 6 per cent money — a billion dollars — to people in the province of Saskatchewan. These are in elevators or in RM offices so that farmers can pick up the information and say, this is the kind of program I can get in livestock that wasn't there under the NDP. Here's the kind of program I can get on a rural gas distribution program that wasn't there with the NDP. Here's the kind of 6 per cent interest rate protection that wasn't there under the NDP. Here's a cash advance for livestock that wasn't under the NDP. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? That's information so that they can survive under economic conditions, and the reason that they turfed out the other people to start with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the Premier. Will the Premier not admit that \$17 million was the figure for 1984-85 and that for the year which ended yesterday of 1985-86 that the government advertising bill will top \$20 million of taxpayers' money that could have been better spent on providing some of the services such as staff badly needed in our hospitals?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, if you want, I'll compare our expenditures with the members opposite at any time when it comes to health care. With respect to agriculture, with respect to new nursing homes, with respect to economic activity in job creation, Mr. Speaker, I'll compare them. If the hon. member wants to compare dollar for dollar, I'll take education, I'll take budget and information programs that allow people to take advantage of various opportunities in the province is precisely what the government should be spending on, not the Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations created by the NDP that said this big bureaucracy was a family and the one we should bow down to. In our administration in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the people are in control. The people come first, the government second. The people across had it the other way around.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm quite prepared to compare the \$6 million bill for advertising in 1982 which that leader of the opposition, now Premier, attacked because he said ... (inaudible interjection) ... 6 million. He said it was excessive. Now he is trying to tell the taxpayers of Saskatchewan that 17 million in '84-85 and well over 20 million in 1985-86 is not excessive.

I want to ask, Mr. Speaker, in a supplementary to the Premier. I asked a question in this House of the Deputy Premier last week in which I asked how much was spent in the last six weeks on government advertising, mainly

political advertising. I asked if it was 3 million to \$5 million. The Deputy Premier did not confirm it.

Can I ask the Premier today whether he will confirm that in the last six weeks 3 to \$5 million has been spent in government advertising prior to an election campaign?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to advertising, I want to say on this booklet that farmers appreciate that. Farmers aren't the only people that appreciate it. Here's a letter to the Premier:

Dear Mr. Premier: I wish to thank you for your letter of February 28th and for the booklet about agriculture assistance programs in Saskatchewan. I've read a good many government documents, condensed or uncondensed, and I find this one very impressive in respect of the information it gives and of the way the information is organized. Yours truly, Alexander Farrell, *Reader's Digest* Editor.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if *Reader's Digest* magazine, and the editor, says this is one of the best and most informational pieces of document that he's seen on agriculture ever, in terms of information provided, and farmers like it, Mr. Speaker, the only people that don't like it are the NDP. It's good information. It provides solid information. And when the *Reader's Digest* and the farmers both like it, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that's a bouquet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

Bill No. 12 — An Act respecting Property Improvement Grants

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting Property Improvement Grants.

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

Bill No. 13 — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Income Tax Act.

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

Bill No. 14 — An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act for the Purpose of repealing Provisions Imposing a Sales Tax on Used Vehicles

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Education and Health Tax Act for the Purpose of repealing Provisions Imposing a Sales Tax on Used Vehicles.

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

Bill No. 15 — An Act respecting the Application in Saskatchewan of the United Nations Convention on the

Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards

Hon. Mr. Dutchak: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Application in Saskatchewan of the United Nations Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

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

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Finance in what I believe is an excellent budget, and coming from one, Mr. Speaker, who has done one or two of these budgets, I believe that the Minister of Finance has in fact done a very, very credible job. Where you could measure that, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, is if you look at the editorials of the newspapers across the province, whether it's the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, the *Leader-Post*, or most other newspapers; what those people are saying is, job well done, Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, what we also hear from talking to members across the province, by our caucus, of members of the various interest groups, what they're saying is, job well done, Minister of Finance. And as we talk to the people across the province, Mr. Speaker, what the people in the province are saying is, job well done.

What I want to concentrate on, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Speaker, as one who has done one of these, or two, before, I always sit back and perhaps judge how well a budget is being received by the population by simply looking at the response and the reaction of the Leader of the Opposition. If the Leader of the Opposition stammers and stumbles, that means the budget is going over pretty good. You get a pretty good read the first night. And watching the Leader of the Opposition responding to this budget, Mr. Speaker, he stumbled and stammered more than I've ever seen, Mr. Speaker. That was the first good sign.

What I would like to concentrate on in my remarks today, Mr. Speaker, are four points, four points addressed in this budget, four points being addressed by this government. One is in the field of agriculture; two is in the field of the Saskatchewan pension plan; three is the area of small business that this budget certainly concentrated on; and number four is the building and the building blocks and opportunity that this budget provides for.

Let me turn to the first issue. The first issue, Mr. Speaker,

that I saw in this budget, and certainly the programs of this particular administration — that's in the field of agriculture. Now Saskatchewan agriculture and Saskatchewan farmers have been on fairly difficult times, Mr. Speaker, over the last three and four years; difficult, difficult commodity prices, Mr. Speaker, wheat prices are down — difficult, difficult problems. On top of that, over the last couple of years they have not had the rains or, in other parts of the province, they've had too much rain. Last year as well, we were almost devastated in a goodly part of this province with grasshoppers. Difficult times, Mr. Speaker, for the farmers of this province.

This government, Mr. Speaker, more than any other government in the past, this government listened, listened to the farmers of Saskatchewan. The Premier, various ministers, the various caucus of this administration went to those farmers and listened and listened for their responses. And, Mr. Speaker, this government has responded to agriculture, responded in a way never, ever seen before in this province. This budget alone, I think, adds over 100 per cent increase to the budget for the Department of Agriculture, and certainly far larger than that over the last four years of this administration.

Some have been critical of the funding to agriculture by this administration, and perhaps they are people living in the cities, perhaps very often the members opposite. We have responded, Mr. Speaker, with a 6 per cent operating loan for the farmer — very, very well received — almost a billion dollars out there. And the people of my constituency, whether Tory, Liberal, or NDP, have basically said, that was a program that this province needed; that was a program that made a lot of sense, and certainly a program that is very helpful to the farmer facing fairly significant costs of putting his crop in this spring.

They're also favourable to the farm purchase program brought in four years ago and added to in each year after that. They're favourable to rebating the royalties of the oil industry back to agriculture, and again reducing the price of gasoline and diesel in this province by 21 cents a gallon.

They're thankful for the response of this government, both last year and again this year, that we are prepared to stand and assist the farmer in the event of pests or grasshoppers. They are thankful, Mr. Speaker, for the response that we've been able to do to the cattle industry, to the hog industry, and our ability to stand up as a government and say, look, this can no longer happen that this particular and very important industry should be allowed to slowly be whittled away and moved down to the eastern part of this country. We stand behind that cattle producer and behind that hog producer.

They're also thankful, Mr. Speaker, for the new processing industries we're looking at, the bacon plant, some of the new technologies being looked at in agriculture, and believe that is the way that we must move forward. They are also very thankful, Mr. Speaker, for the commitment that this government makes to research and development in the field of agriculture. Whether it's the building of the agriculture college, almost \$80 million in the city of Saskatoon; while of advantage to the city of

Saskatoon, it's of great advantage to farmers and agriculture throughout this entire province.

Mr. Speaker, what I hear the people out in my constituency saying is, the Tories are good for the farmers; the Tories have responded to the farmers.

I think it must be remembered, Mr. Speaker, when we respond to the farmer it's more than simply responding to the farmer, because when the farmers of Saskatchewan have money, they spend it, and they spend it primarily in this province. They spend it in the small towns, and they spend it in the cities. You talk to a business man in down-town Kindersley, or talk to a business man in down-town Regina, and what do you hear? Put money to the farmers and those farmers will spend it, and they will spend it on Saskatchewan products.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps equally as important is the fact that our Premier has taken on the very difficult job of responding to the serious, clearly the most pressing problem in Saskatchewan today, and that's the farm problem. And our Premier responded to it by taking that job on himself; taking that job on himself, Mr. Speaker, and clearly I think we were proud on this side of the House, and I think most of Saskatchewan was proud of the way our Premier, at the last first ministers' meeting, responded not only for our farmers, but responded for farmers across this entire country and took agriculture to a place on the national agenda that it had not seen since the days of John Diefenbaker. And we're proud of that too, Mr. Speaker.

I say to you, the Tories have stood . . . this administration has stood where we belong, and that is in the field of agriculture. And I think we can be proud of it.

You might ask yourself though, Mr. Speaker, you might ask yourself what is the alternative, what is the alternative of the members opposite. While they can be critical of this program and this program and this program, what do they really offer in return? Mr. Speaker, they offer in return the land bank. That is what we would have under an NDP administration, government owning the land, running the farms. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe rural Saskatchewan believes in land bank. I don't believe that is the way of the future. And I hope for the day when the farmers of Saskatchewan will have the opportunity of telling us exactly that.

Mr. Speaker, the second part of the budget which I thought was very good and showed, I believe, a new direction on the one hand, but showed a philosophical difference between the two political parties in this House on the second, and that is the Saskatchewan pension plan.

The Saskatchewan pension plan has come to grips, has dealt for the first time in this country – perhaps the first time in North America – with the question that has been around and has been faced by governments time and time again, and that is the case of a housewife, at home, opting for that option, to raise her family and stay in the home and be a home-maker. Why should that person not have also an opportunity to participate in many of the saving devices that we see in our society today, and that for the

most part has not been available.

Mr. Speaker, this new pension plan will respond to that problem and allow that home-maker, allow that parent to equally put money away so that when they reach 65 they can have the dignity that many of the other people, whether they are in the work-force or whatever they might be, that they can also have the dignity of having an income and having an income generated by themselves. And I believe that is very, very fundamental and very, very important.

Now the members opposite have announced a program that would be a guaranteed annual income for senior citizens. All senior citizens age 65, as I understand the program, would get X amount of money, X amount of dollars. What this does, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me, is say to people this: don't worry about saving during your early years; don't worry about saving money before age 60 because we will look after you.

Our programs says to people: we want to, with you, with the initiative that you would take, assist you in building some security that you have a sense of ownership of; that you believe in; that you have saved; that you have put together; and it's yours, Mr. Speaker. It's not something that somebody can decide to take away at a budget each and every year or to set in a budget each and every year. It's something that you have contributed to, whether you take that money from a variety of sources, that you can put money in and assist and build something for yourself.

And it seems to me that's what Saskatchewan is about. Certainly that is what divides, perhaps as much as any, the members of this government and the members of the NDP. We stand for that sense of individual initiative, of doing something for yourself however small it can be, a program that provides that sense of principle, sense of ownership that I believe is so important.

(1445)

The second dimension of that pension program addresses another, I think, crying need in this province. If you look at the number of jobs being created, not only here but across Canada and across North America, those jobs are being created by small business – small business very often comprising of perhaps no more than five employees.

One of the problems that both the business man and the person working in that small business has had is the inability to have his own pension plan in a meaningful way; his own pension plan that can be contributed to by himself, and perhaps the business, and perhaps government. One of the problems with it is, for a small business like that to fit into some kind of a pension program, it becomes very expensive because for five employees it becomes very, very difficult to administer.

We, Mr. Speaker, will address that question when the Minister of Finance comes down with further details with regard to the Saskatchewan pension plan. But I can tell you it's going to be well received. It's going to be well received by small business; people that we understand; people that we listen to; people that we regard.

It's going to be received by those people, and it's going to be received by the thousands and thousands of people working in those small businesses – people, Mr. Speaker, that, after the farmer, are the backbone of the economy of this province; people that have not had pensions; people that have said, I don't want to go work for government, but if I go work for government, I can get a pension.

Now surely in a society, Mr. Speaker, we should be encouraging our people to stay with those small businesses, to work in those small businesses, and allow them a mechanism that will treat them at least as well as their brothers that work in larger corporations or government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me deal then with the third element of the budget, and that is small business. Anybody that looks at the statistic in a realistic and meaningful way on job creating in this country will have to come to one conclusion: the new jobs are being built by small business – small business again hiring perhaps five people, on average, at best.

Those are the people, Mr. Speaker, that take their savings and take it to risk. Those are the people that are prepared to work late into the night to make sure their venture goes. Those are the people that work with their wife and family, perhaps to run the books, to make it go. Those are the people that have an idea or have some initiative or innovation and make it go, Mr. Speaker. And those are the people that should be encouraged to build this economy.

And, Mr. Speaker, this government has responded in this budget to those people. I believe that we have provided the climate by which small business can flourish in this province today and well into the future. That, Mr. Speaker, I believe is very important.

We have responded to those people by saying, you will have some assistance, you small business – small business, Mr. Speaker – with loans of \$100,000. We will provide you with assistance, and you in turn will provide us with more jobs and provide us with more revenues because more people are working.

That, Mr. Speaker, is well received by the business people across Saskatchewan – 8 per cent, Mr. Speaker, 8 per cent for small business – well received, Mr. Speaker. Farmers and small business.

The member from Regina North East, former member from Humboldt, says, what about bankruptcies? Well, Mr. Speaker, that is really what you hear from the members opposite. They can talk about bankruptcies. Don't start a small business because you might fail; don't start a small business because you might fail; don't worry about employment. They're against small business.

The reality of the member opposite, if he would stand in his place following me and tell the people of Saskatchewan what he believes about small business, the member opposite will try to, in his flaky way, Mr. Speaker, talk about business. The reality is the NDP do

not believe in risk for the individual, they don't believe in profit for the individual, and certainly they don't believe in a reward for people that take a risk.

As a result, what they do, Mr. Speaker, and what they believe in, is this: if he makes a profit, big as he might be, small as he might be, we will tax it. That's what they tell small business: we will tax it. And if we can't tax it enough, and it still makes money, we'll nationalize it and we will have another Crown corporation. That's what they stand for in small business.

What do they understand in small business? If, Mr. Speaker, they understood small business, would they not have responded in a way to assist the small-business person with lower interest rates, especially at a . . .

An Hon. Member: — And a strong economy.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — A strong economy says the vocal member from Regina North East. Twenty-two per cent interest rates – small business in 1982 in my constituency, I'll tell you, the small-business guy didn't say thank you for the strong economy, Mr. Minister, at that point in time. He asked for help. He asked for help, but that was not on the agenda of the NDP, and, Mr. Speaker, nor is it now on the agenda of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that we have done for small business in this province, besides the many points raised in that budget, is we have also tried to put together a series of fairly significant projects in this province, projects that we have taken care, and projects that we believe it's important that we allow small business to have a chance to deal with those particular major projects, to participate in contracts that perhaps otherwise would have been too large.

Mr. Speaker, I think of the new power Rafferty dam project in Estevan – thousands of jobs, thousands of dollars spinning off to small business. Projects the members opposite are against.

The upgrader in Regina, the NewGrade upgrader in Regina, working in conjunction with CCIL and Federated Co-op, we have made it a concerted effort that small business in the city of Regina, in the province of Saskatchewan, will have an opportunity to participate in those projects.

The new forest strategy, Mr. Speaker, says it all with regards to small business and the opportunity for small business, whether it is assisting in the building of the new paper plant, or number two, if it's the small business, the small cutter and his family – a local small business – has an opportunity to participate in the harvesting of the forest, in the harvesting of the forest that before was cast away. Another project the members opposite stand against.

Our projects in the area of high technology, Mr. Speaker, and the number of new high technology companies that this province has been able to generate over the last four and five years is very, very positive. Again, projects that we are very, very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps if you look at all of these, the areas of dollars into agriculture does more for small business than perhaps many of the projects the government can undertake. Mr. Speaker, again I believe that this budget responded to the interests and the purpose of small business in Saskatchewan.

Let me turn to the final point, Mr. Speaker, and that brings me to the question that this budget continues, Mr. Speaker, to build and to build on our future — a very, very important point of what we believe is important.

Now let me go and list what this budget does, what previous policies of this government has done. What we said in coming to office is we believe that the tourism industry is an important industry in this province, important because it's something that has been neglected for years, but an area that we believe can be brought to life. And, Mr. Speaker, we have responded to tourism, and the numbers and the statistics will bear that fact out. The increase of over 25 per cent for the last two and three years of the number of visitors, the number of tourists to our province, the number of new facilities being built, Mr. Speaker, and we must continue on that. That must not be allowed to be halted, to stop.

One of the areas in tourism that our administration is looking forward to this year is Expo '86, a project that was jumped on very early by our administration as a good idea. And those members opposite said, oh, you're wasting money. I recall the questions in this House day after day after day: don't participate in Expo '86; Saskatchewan should not participate; stand up with your brothers in Manitoba, and be and tell it the way it is, and boycott Expo.

Mr. Speaker, the business of Saskatchewan will be incredible this year with the number of tourists coming through from eastern Canada, from other parts of eastern United States, travelling through our province, many for the first time — an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for our people to get out and show them what Saskatchewan can do; for the people of North Battleford or Prince Albert or Saskatoon or Yorkton or Swift Current or Moosomin, Moose Jaw, have an opportunity and a crack at some tourists for the first time, Mr. Speaker. And I believe those people will be up to that challenge.

Number two: we build, Mr. Speaker, in the oil industry. Now perhaps nothing has been more criticized than our policy as it relates to the oil industry by the members opposite. Mr. Speaker, the oil industry has responded in a way that no one in their wildest dreams would have expected. Mr. Speaker, it has produced revenue for this province; it has produced thousands and thousands of jobs — 12,000, by our count. And many of those happened in my riding, in Kindersley, Mr. Speaker.

And while today that industry is looking at troubled times; it's looking at a loss of the price of oil of almost one-half — and that's hard for them to swallow, Mr. Speaker, and that's difficult for them to cope with . . . But, Mr. Speaker, I am confident that price will respond, and I am confident that industry will stay intact and stay in place. And once that price starts to come back, that industry will respond in the way it has over the last four years.

But what about the members opposite? They would have us believe, and they would go to a place like Kindersley and tell the people of Kindersley: we will help you; we will tax that industry by another \$300 million. And you know what would happen, Mr. Speaker? That industry would die. That industry in Saskatchewan would die, and the people in the oil patch understand that.

Now if you can make the oil industry go, Mr. Speaker, you can build upgraders. And the upgrader in Regina, the new upgrader in Regina, is a product of that oil policy over the last four years: a project that for the first time ever, Mr. Speaker, will allow us in Saskatchewan to find, to produce, and to manufacture and refine our own oil in Saskatchewan. We no longer have to ship that into United States — 60 per cent of our oil — subject to the world market, subject to the Ayatollah Khomeini or the sheikhs of the various parts of the Middle East.

Today, Mr. Speaker, that project is going to go forward. And that's a project that all Saskatchewan should be proud of, a project that the members opposite would have us destroy by simply destroying the oil industry, Mr. Speaker. And I think that is terribly dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, the third area is: we have responded to the forest industry and the demands of the forest industry. And that has been a very difficult problem over the last four years for this administration — I think, for any administration.

We were caught with difficult pulp prices for the last three or four, probably five years — five years, because it was even during the previous administration's time. And they couldn't produce a forest policy. And we wrestled with that problem for a fair period of time.

But now, working together with the various ministers, the various departments of government, the Crown corporations, and the industry, we have struck what many regard as a very, very good deal for the forest; a very, very good deal for the small contractors, Mr. Speaker; a very, very good deal for the people that work in Prince Albert, in PAPCO.

Mr. Speaker, it is a project of a good corporate citizen — again, something that makes the NDP turn brown; they don't like them, Mr. Speaker. But that is a positive step — a positive step forward, Mr. Speaker — and, I think, a step that has been favoured by many people in the province of Saskatchewan, certainly the people in the northern area of this province.

Mr. Speaker, let me just refer to a few more. Let's look at the uranium industry in this province. This government has said to the uranium industry, we will stand behind you. We will stand with you because the uranium industry — even though the commodity prices are low, even though you're not making a great deal of money — what that industry does is provide hope for northern people and provide hope for many of the people across Saskatchewan who can supply that particular industry. It also, Mr. Speaker, provides potential revenue for the Government of Saskatchewan.

And we will stand for the uranium industry, Mr. Speaker. Properly controlled, properly managed, it is an industry that we should not turn our backs on. That's an industry the members opposite have turned their backs on, have responded to Peter Prebble and a small group of radicals and said, no, we as a party would shut it down.

Mr. Speaker, does that build a future? Does that build on our strengths in the province of Saskatchewan? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker.

(1500)

But let me close, Mr. Speaker, really . . . But in the end, if you're going to build, if you're going to provide a future for the province of Saskatchewan, there is no place that you can begin, there is no place that you can really respond more, than the field of agriculture. If you don't respond to agriculture, if you don't build an agriculture, how are you going to build this province, Mr. Speaker?

And you must continue, Mr. Speaker, to do new things in agriculture. If it means participating in the GATT agreements, the provinces for the first time have an opportunity to be at the table of the GATT. NDP are against that. For the first time we are able to build plants that will start to process our hogs — a new plant. The NDP are against it.

We're looking for new varieties of wheat. The NDP say, you don't need that. Mr. Speaker, we're building a new university college of agriculture. The NDP say, that was not our priority.

Mr. Speaker, whether you live in the town, or whether you live in a city, or whether you live on the farm, agriculture is what Saskatchewan's economy is all about. Mr. Speaker, this budget responded to agriculture. This budget responded to agriculture in a way that a provincial government has never responded to that industry before. That, Mr. Speaker, is good for all of Saskatchewan. That is good for all people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and I believe the people of Saskatchewan understand that.

Let me close by simply saying: what is the alternative, Mr. Speaker? What is the alternative to the Minister of Finance's budget? The members opposite with their newly found sense of give-aways . . . I forget what they call it in the paper here — crazy Al's shopping centre, or something. Come to crazy Al's — that's the newest program, Mr. Speaker.

But I think more important than that, because I think people see through that very quickly . . . Especially the same people that were critical of those programs four short years ago are now saying, here we've seen the light, my friends. Now we have some new programs of our own.

Those are seen through, Mr. Speaker. I'll tell you why. They're seen through because people know that you really don't believe it. And people have a way of seeing that in your eyes, and seeing that in your conscience. You were against gas tax assistance. You were against mortgage assistance. Why now, in the dying days of this

legislative session, have you all of a sudden had a change of heart? You will not be able to look people in the eye and fundamentally say that, I believe in that particular program that our leader has advanced for us. You won't be able to say it because you don't believe it.

And number two, Mr. Speaker, is the people of this province want a government prepared to build; a government prepared to look forward, not a government that looks backwards and says bring back the old program. Mr. Speaker, this particular time the people of the province of Saskatchewan want to know what you will do, what you are for, and how you would build — not what you are against and what you would tear down.

Mr. Speaker, that is no more. There is no better way to symbolize that than look at the two leaders that talk across this floor daily in this House. One, a man that has been in politics perhaps 30 years, a man that has spent his lifetime in government and done nothing else, a man who is heading towards the old age pension, and a man who wants to restore his faith; and a man, Mr. Speaker, who is young, who is a farmer, who is dynamic, who wants to go forward, and wants to dream and to build.

Mr. Speaker, that is the difference. One leader wants to go forward, the other leader wants to go backwards. And, Mr. Speaker, whenever the Premier decides, the people of this province are going to have a chance. Elect me, will say the NDP, and I'll take you back to yesterday. Elect me, will say our Premier, and I will take you forward to tomorrow. That is what this budget is about; that is why I endorse this budget wholeheartedly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to be able to join in this budget debate because I think it's necessary to actually tell the story as it is and point out that this budget is, as I will describe it later, not far from being a bit of a fraud.

Now I'm kind of pleased to be able to follow the member from Kindersley, the former minister of finance. This is the man who was the architect of last year's most intelligent budget. Surely anyone who would prepare the most intelligent budget is one worthy to follow in this debate.

But I want to say to the members of this House and to you, Mr. Speaker, that in his remarks somehow he failed even in a fleeting moment to refer to that most intelligent budget, and I'm wondering why. I agree, I think he said at some point in time, the Saskatchewan people are able and willing and capable to face up to any challenge. And yes, they certainly are.

I think Saskatchewan people can do again what they have done in the past and take this province and build it to what they want it to be. But they have to be given the chance, and they have not been given a chance and an opportunity to do that by this Conservative government. All of the opportunities that they might have had, this government has gone out of its way to take away from them because they would not emphasize this ability of the co-operative spirit that Saskatchewan people have, and their belief that they cannot depend on somebody

from outside to come and do it for them, but that they together – working together and co-operatively – can do it themselves for themselves, and for their children, and for their families. They have done it before, and they will do it again under an NDP government as soon as these people over there dare to call an election.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why did the former minister of finance refuse to refer to his budget? Well, I'll tell you. He said something about what the previous policies of this government has done. Then he listed some examples which lack some credibility.

But let me tell you what the people of Saskatchewan see that the policies of this government has done, and what this budget reinforces – this new budget. It has increased the number of people on welfare to over 60,000, a record in Saskatchewan history. The policies of this Conservative government have increased unemployment to over 40,000 people. Every year there has been an increase in unemployment.

The policies of this government have caused services to become deteriorated. The policies of this government, in the most intelligent budget, put on a new flat tax which was nothing more than a tax grab by this Conservative government and took out of the pockets of Saskatchewan consumers about \$100 million, which could have, and would have been spent in those small businesses that the member from Kindersley spoke of — \$100 million in the flat tax which again made the low- and middle-income people pay more, while those who have the ability to fill in tax loopholes saved even more and got wealthier on it.

Why didn't the member from Kindersley talk about the sales tax on used vehicles? Oh, I know he would have said, but we removed it, we made a mistake. But I would have wanted him to say, why is he and this Premier and this government making 60,000 people – 60,000 people who paid this sales tax on used cars and trucks – pay the price. Why are they being punished for this government's mistake? Why have they not in this budget said they will return that sales tax that those people for eight months paid? Not a great deal of money in total, but to many of them, in their particular income situation, a great deal of money. Would that have been so difficult to do? No. But they wouldn't do it. Why did he not refer to that?

Why didn't he refer to the greatest property tax increase in my memory – the removal of the property improvement grant in his last budget. No mention of that in this new budget for this coming fiscal year. Another \$80 million taken out of the consumer's pocket, out of families' pockets, which would have been spent in the small-business places of Saskatchewan, in the cities and the towns and the villages.

You want to help small-business people have the money in the economy circulating, and the small-business man will thrive because he relies on that cash register ringing as people purchase the goods that he sells and supplies. This government has made it less possible for people to do that, and the budget that we are now debating even does more of that.

Now I know, Mr. Speaker, that last year's budget was

labelled the most intelligent budget, but I say to you that it turned out to be a nightmare and this year's budget speech continues with the measures of the last budget – does nothing about those grievous things that were done – and that nightmare is now becoming a horror story. Ask the middle- and low-income people out there who are filling out their income tax returns this month, and they'll tell you the price that they have to pay. Between the federal Conservatives and the provincial Conservatives, they both have got their hands in the people's pockets up to their elbows and taking away much needed income that hard-working people are making and should have been able to spend on their families.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now I listened with care to the member's comments on the pension plan. The problem that I'm finding is that he fails to recognize that, as was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition the other day, as meritorious as a pension plan might be, it will not help anybody in the next 20 to 30 years. And so this government chooses in its usual way to ignore the people who are indeed in need now.

The New Democratic Party has a proposal which will help those people between the ages of 60 and 65 who need some form of assistance in the form of a guaranteed income, and we will provide that as soon as they call an election and there's a change of government, and we are on that side of the House and they are on this side.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Why should those people between the ages of 60 and 65 today and tomorrow and the next year and the year after that be ignored while they wait for 30 years for this government's plan, which we have not seen any single bit about yet, come into force.

I want to ask the question, and I wish the Minister of Finance would listen: if they really do have a pension plan, why has it not been tabled in this House? I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, because on the eve of an election, which the member from Kindersley referred to, they make a bunch of announcements, knowing that, if they happen to get elected, most of them will never see the light of day.

Now the history of this government and this party since 1982 shows that, and I'll make some reference to it in the remarks that I have to make later. There is no guarantee under a Conservative government that what they say will actually be what they do – no guarantee at all. The people of Saskatchewan have learned it; they know it, and they're not going to take that chance again.

Oh, we keep hearing members opposite talk about the oil upgrader in Regina. And you know what the people in Regina North East said, Mr. Speaker, during the by-election campaign? They said, "The upgrader is fine; get rid of Devine."

But the thing I find of particular interest, even though this upgrader which we welcomed was announced in great hoop-la just before the call of an by-election, there is yet to

be a shovelful of dirt moved on that construction site, and it was starting immediately back in October. What's happened? Where is it?

I say to the government opposite that, as is the case with this budget, their whole credibility is beginning to wane badly day after day. If there was any slight motion in the construction of that upgrader, which I wish was going already, it would look like a burst of speed. But people are still waiting, in spite of those promises.

(1515)

Now the member from Kindersley also made some reference to small businesses. I have said, well I think in simple terms there is a response to the record of this government with regard to small business, and it comes in the April *Saturday Night* edition. It's called "Hard Times," and it quotes in here:

Like Brian Mulroney, Grant Devine was elected on a Tory landslide, but his term has been plagued by bad management, and Saskatchewan voters may be ready to restore the NDP.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — And if there is anything that small-business people know better than anything else, Mr. Speaker, it's good management. And they recognize in this government, through successive budgets since 1982, and reinforced again in this one, that this government are not good managers. They have brought this province from prosperity to a deficit which one would never have been able to imagine could be possible four years ago.

So, Mr. Speaker, the budget and the speech by the Minister of Finance indeed does have a major highlight. I'll admit to that. That highlight is how little credibility this Devine government really has. That's the highlight of the budget speech. After four years of this government, and five budgets which have all been ones of disappointment, ones of promises made in large numbers only to be broken soon afterwards, the people of this province just don't believe this government any more.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — And you know, it wouldn't have mattered what kind of a budget the Minister of Finance presented, Saskatchewan people would have not believed it anyway because they know that what this budget says is not the real story. They have been misled, and they have been disappointed too many times.

Let me just begin for a little while and talk about the nature of the speech itself. It was probably the longest budget speech ever given in this House. It was probably the most politically partisan budget speech ever given in the House. One would have thought that in a statement of economic and fiscal policy there should have been some degree of statesmanship. That disappeared with this budget for the first time. And yet it was probably also the most backward-looking budget document ever produced in this legislature. And I ask why.

As I go around the province and my constituency in the city of Regina, people are asking why. Well I'll tell you why, and they know it. Because the minister had nothing to say. And because this government in that budget document had nothing to say, they had to make it as long as possible, because any teacher will tell you, or any psychologist would tell you that when speakers or writers have nothing to say, they try to make up for it in length and volume. They ramble around. And that's what the Minister of Finance was desperately trying to do on budget night.

Why, Mr. Speaker? Also because the government is trying desperately to cover up the mess that it has created. It's hoping that concerns about a staggering deficit, about high and unfair taxes, about bad management by the government are going to be deflected by political rhetoric. Well I suggest to those members over there, it will not work. It will not work.

Saskatchewan people have already decided that they can't afford another four years of this Devine government. They know it. They have made that decision, and nothing will change it. Because they know that to re-elect his government would be like the gambler playing the tables of Las Vegas. And we all know how many people who go down there come back winners . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Not too many. The member from Regina North, now the fugitive in Regina South, has been there. He knows not many come back. Not many people win there, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell you that with a Conservative government in Saskatchewan and a Conservative government in Ottawa, many people in Saskatchewan don't win. Most of them don't win. Oh yes, a few do. We've talked about it; it's been talked about in the press; we talked about in this legislature. A few win.

As the Leader of the Opposition said the other day, the Peter Pocklington he wins. You know the millionaire from Alberta, the former candidate for the Conservative national leadership — he won. He got \$10 million. Manalta Coal, they win. They're winners. They have a \$145 million guarantee to buy up our coal mines at the Saskatchewan taxpayers' guarantee.

There is fellow, a company by the name of Weyerhaeuser now, which the member from Kindersley talked about. Well they're going to get \$248 million with no repayment terms. And even the Premier admits that. And when we ask: okay, maybe it's a good deal. Maybe it will do good. But table the document so that we can see. This government refused to do it because they know that the minute they table those documents, if indeed there is an agreement, all of their arguments are going to get blown out of the water — \$248 million that the Saskatchewan people, through guarantees, are putting up.

Oh, the bankers and the bond dealers, they're going to gain. They're winners. But the average Saskatchewan citizen under this government, and under this budget, does not win. And the average Saskatchewan citizen and family has decided that after this next election they can't afford to take a Las Vegas gamble on this government

again. And they're going to boot them out.

Now the Minister of Finance also said that Saskatchewan residents enjoy one of the lowest tax burdens in this country. And I say that if it was not so serious it would almost have been laughable to hear him say that. Once again, he is not credible. And let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, why he is not credible. And I invite the member from Rosemont, the member from Rosemont who provides \$200 a month to people on welfare to get some rent in this city – I invite him to look on page 56 of the budget speech, and here's what he'll find. This is the government and the minister who talks about the low taxes of Saskatchewan people.

Well here's the page. It comes right out of the budget documents, and I've brought it with me. And what happens to a taxpayer of two adults and two children with an income of 30,000 per annum under this government that has supposedly reduced taxes? Well he is the third-highest income tax payer in Canada. The only provinces in which people of 30,000, family of four, pay higher provincial income tax is Quebec, with \$2,185, and Newfoundland with \$2,072. And might I add, they're not very far ahead, because in Saskatchewan that same family will pay \$2,011 of provincial income tax. And the Minister of Finance has the gumption to stand up in this House and talk about how we are among the lowest-taxed people in this country. And I say, who is he trying to kid?

And I say, let him go around the city of Regina and just meet some people who this month have filled out their income tax returns and have found out what this great reform, so-called, that they supposedly have in this flat tax, has done to those people. And I'm sure he would come running back here and ask if he could remake his speech.

It's because of this kind of, as our leader said, flimflam – I would use stronger words – it's because of this kind of flimflam, and using of selected figures rather than the real ones, that the credibility of this government and the Minister of Finance are gone. And people know that what they say is not what they do. And people know that they no longer can be trusted. That flat tax was a major tax increase, just as the removal of the property improvement grant was. It was not a reform; it was a means by which this government could reach deeper into the pockets of the low- and middle-income people and take more money so that they could give it to Peter Pocklington.

And the one thing that people are also beginning to discover, that this year is only half of what they're going to pay next year. And that was a nice little trick, because the 1985 flat tax is based only on half a year. So I say to the taxpayer of Saskatchewan who's filling out his income tax return: watch out, because next year, if this government is returned, it won't be the amount you paid this year; you multiply it by two, and it's going to be twice as much. And that's what these people call tax reform.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that this budget fails to deal with a very serious problem of an unfair tax system which has been made more unfair by the policies of this government. And let me just extend this further and show

you how having a Conservative government here in Saskatchewan and one in Ottawa makes it even worse.

Let me give the example of a person pumping gas for Shell Oil. Well this person who's pumping gas for Shell Oil, I might say, Mr. Speaker, and it's important to take note, paid more income taxes in 1982 than Shell Oil paid with its profits of \$302 million and assets of \$4.7 billion – all because of federal government, Conservative government policies and Liberal government policies. And the teller working for the Royal Bank of Canada paid more income tax that same year than the bank, though the Royal had profits of well over \$300 million.

Now I ask you: is that a fair tax system? Is that a fair tax system? And what has Mr. Wilson's Conservative budget and this Minister of Finance's — Saskatchewan – what have they done to this unbelievably unfair situation? They did little to correct that unfairness in our tax system.

Instead, the Conservatives hit the average income earner again with more taxes. And since September of 1984, when the Mulroney government was elected, they have increased family taxes by some \$1,305 a year. And these people in this province have dumped more taxes through the flat tax and the removal of the property improvement tax on top of that. And this is what they call tax reform.

The provincial government is doing the same as the federal government, and I say that this province cannot afford a Conservative government in Ottawa and a Conservative government in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — And it's not being original on my part, because it's been said before, but the line is, that nobody has doubts about any more: a Tory is a Tory is a Tory is a Tory, whether it's in Ottawa or Saskatchewan. And if you have them in both places, you pay the price twice as much.

And the grievous thing about this is that in spite of this tax grab of low- and middle-income people, we still have a deficit that's unbelievably large. And what do we have to show for it? Well we have highways that are falling apart because they have not provided enough funds in the last four years to maintain them at an adequate level. We have hospitals that don't have enough nurses and other staff in them to provide the kind of care that they are used to providing.

It's like buying a house. When I buy a house, or anybody in Saskatchewan buys a house, they take out a mortgage. And for that mortgage, they know they have to pay it back, but at least they have a house. Well to the tune of \$2 billion, over \$2 billion, this government has mortgaged the province of Saskatchewan, and the crime of it all is that there is nothing to show for it. That is what's so wrong, Mr. Speaker; that's what's so wrong.

Now the other reason why this government has lost its credibility, and all across the province people are saying, what is this budget; nobody believe it – it's because their record on their promises is so bad.

I mean, I just use one example. It was raised in the House the other day. I have here a pamphlet that has the Premier's picture on it which was distributed to everybody in Saskatchewan in 1982. And what did it say? It said – sincerely – that if a Conservative government was elected, there would be the complete elimination of the sales tax in its first term of office. Now this is a government that said it meant what it was saying.

Here is similar campaign literature from the member from Sutherland. It says, "Schoenhals for Saskatoon Sutherland." What did he promise? He promised to reduce provincial income tax by 10 per cent. What's the result? A flat tax. Income tax went up. He promised to remove the 5 per cent E&H tax – they all said in the first term. What's happened? We had a sales tax on used vehicles which they then removed but 60,000 people had to pay for their mistake, be punished for their mistake. And they won't even have the goodwill or the intestinal fortitude to go so far as to return that money which those people so unfairly paid.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Kindersley mentioned something about leadership. Well you know what leadership is and everybody expects it to be? Leadership is going to the people that one wishes to represent and say, here is what we stand for; here is what we will do if you elect us – and then after that delivering on those promises. If that's a measure of leadership, Mr. Speaker, then this government has failed miserably, because on those promises it has not delivered.

And so what do they do instead? In question period today we raised the matter of government advertising – well over \$20 million this year, and I submit it's approaching \$30 million – political advertising, money which could have been spent on other more important things.

Why the advertising? Because they're desperately trying now to rebuild an image which is tarnished, an image that nobody wants to have anything to do with. But I say that that image building has failed. It's failed. It's failed like everything else that this government has tried. And let me just give some examples further of this lack of leadership.

(1530)

I recall, back in 1982, the Conservatives were promising that there would be a freezing of utility rates. Well, what have we seen? We've seen Saskatchewan Power Corporation electrical, farm and residential rates increase by an average of 38 per cent. We've seen SaskTel basic rates increase by 21 per cent. We've seen the SGI deductible change from \$350 to \$500, an increase of 43 per cent. These are the fellows that were going to freeze utility rates.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker. They promised that they would have Public Utilities Review Commission and this Public Utilities Commission was going to oversee all changes in those kinds of rates.

Well now, Mr. Speaker, what do they? They establish this commission, and when it makes a recommendation, because they said it's going to be arm's-length distance

from government, what do they? They interfere. They interfere with decisions of the commission.

Here's an article from the *Leader-Post* of March 1, 1986 – very recent – in which it says:

On Dec. 18, cabinet reversed a 1984 PURC decision that Saskatchewan Government Insurance's (SGI) auto reserve fund would not exceed \$38.5 million.

Oh, yes. In the hands of this Conservative Devine government, if an independent agency recommends something that suits their purposes, that's all right. But if it recommends something that does not suit their purposes, they have to interfere for their own political reasons. PURC did the same thing with regard to the increase in the deductible for cars, from 350 to 500. What did this government do with this independent agency in which there was going to be no longer political interference? They interfered.

And so now in the throne speech that we've just finished debating, they mention something about a freedom of information Act. Well, on the eve of an election, kind of a deathbed repentance. If this government is elected, I suggest we will never see the light of day of that either.

Now let me just conclude this by mentioning why this government interferes with the PURC rulings on the 38.5 million in the reserve fund. You know why? Because they want to build it up for some political reasons. And here's what the effect of that is. I have here a memorandum from the Saskatchewan Government Insurance office. This memorandum has been sent out to the Hafford Senior Citizens Centre. It's for insurance premiums for the centre. Last year the Hafford senior citizens paid \$80 in premium for their centre. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, what they are being told that they have to pay by this government's new policies in SGI? Not the \$80 that they paid last year, but \$250 in insurance premium. Two hundred . . . I haven't figured out the percentage of that, Mr. Speaker, and I am a little afraid to because I know it's so atrocious. But it's certainly something like 187 per cent.

This is this government's attitude toward keeping costs down for Saskatchewan taxpayers. And Saskatchewan, I submit, Mr. Speaker, will no longer have any part of it.

Now this government talks about being a compassionate government. And they have talked in both the budget debate of the other day, and I think the Minister of Finance made reference to it, and in the throne speech debate, about what they call decentralization of government services. And we don't object to that. In the previous government, before 1982, we did provide decentralization of government services. There's no one in Saskatchewan who will disagree with that. But the element that one has to consider is the fairness with which employees who are transferred . . . have to be taken into consideration. How are they dealt with? Are they dealt with fairly?

Well, let me give you an example of how fairly this government has dealt with those employees in the crop

insurance corporation and the agricultural development corporation. When the employees asked: what will our status be? the Minister of Agriculture, who happens to be the Premier, sent his officials down to meet with them, and you know what they were told? They were told, those employees – mostly women who are married and whose husbands work in the city and cannot move – they were told you have three options: you move, you resign, or you get fired. That's the compassion of this government.

Fairness would demand, Mr. Speaker, that those people be given an option at some other governmental positions that exist. They are not given that option, even though some people in the political side of this government are pretending that they are, and I would hope that they will reconsider, that this government and the Premier will reconsider this dictum that they have given to these employees.

There are people there who have worked for 17 years. As a matter of fact, I know of one who's been there for 24 years. They cannot just pick up and leave and lose all their benefits. They should be given the chance to transfer to open positions in the government so that they can continue to have those benefits.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member from Kindersley talked about the budget. He didn't talk about the most intelligent budget of a year ago. Well I want to say that if a New Democratic government is elected after the next election, that all the damage that was done by this government opposite in the last budget will be undone. People know it will be undone because they know that the New Democratic Party and our leader can be trusted to deliver, because the record will show that.

And so the flat tax will be repealed. It will be gone. The property tax relief for home owners and business people and farmers will be restored; and the money collected under the unfair sales tax on used vehicles will be refunded. That's what this budget should have done: provide to the people the dollar that they can spend so that they can get the goods that they need to raise their families with, and so that they can spend it in small business places and also keep the small business places thriving.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if I may turn to another subject for a little while and say that in four years this government has led this province to the brink of economic nightmare. And I invite the members opposite, the member for Wolseley, to stop being fooled by the cabinet and look at the real facts. I ask the members in the back benches, the private members: ask your cabinet what their facts really are.

I invite them to look at the Finance minister's own figures. I will not use my figures. I'm going to use the Finance minister's figures, which show out of the finance book, that in 1982 and 1983, there was a deficit of \$227 million. You know what it is in 1986, 1987? \$547 million for this one year if you include the \$158 which is hidden — \$158 million which is hidden — so our accumulated deficit is well over \$2 billion. And that doesn't even take into account things like the \$100 million which have been borrowed for the agriculture and commercial equity corporation. This is not a budget. This is what some

people have called a "fudge-it." It's flimflam. And, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that it is almost fraudulent.

And even though that the Minister of Finance stood in this House and said a deficit of \$389 million, he knew that that's not what it was. He knew that it was well over \$600 million when you take into consideration all of the other borrowings that this government is going to be doing. And I ask: why conceal that? Why not lay it out so the Saskatchewan citizen and taxpayer will know? Because, Mr. Speaker, he knows that they would ask for an explanation, and this government can't provide it.

Let's take a look at the record. Let's look, for example, at the province's equity, and this comes out of page 31 of the budget speech. What's happened to the province's equity? We all know what equity is: it's the value of assets less the debt due to borrowing. Well in 1982 the equity of this province was \$1.091 billion. Quite impressive. In 1987 the equity for this province will be minus \$740 million. That's what this government has accomplished in four years. A province with an equity of \$1.091 billion in 1982, down to minus \$740 million in 1987, and that's not a record that I suggest, Mr. Speaker, anybody can be proud of, not even this government.

Let me deal for just a minute with another part that came out in the budget which this expensive advertising that we saw in all that the newspapers didn't talk about. Let's talk about the total debt of the province. You know what this budget tells us about the total debt of the province? Well in 1982 the total debt of the province was a modest \$3.3 billion — \$3.3 billion. After four years of this government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I'll tell the member from Prince Albert what he might believe is modest. Do you know what the debt is — \$8.7 billion. This government, with its great policies, has brought the debt of this province from \$3.3 billion to \$8.7 billion in four short years — almost triple. And I say Saskatchewan people can't afford another four years of that kind of performance. That's an example of terrible mismanagement. That's an example of leadership that practically does not exist.

We can do better in Saskatchewan. We have done better in Saskatchewan, and we will do better in Saskatchewan when they call an election and this New Democratic Party is the government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I could dwell at some length about the record of the government, but I think it is well-known. I think the important thing beyond that is that this budget does nothing more than reinforce that bad record. It punishes working people so that this government can reward their friends. It punishes low- and middle-income people so that this government can reward the out-of-province, huge corporations like the Pocklington's with the taxpayers' money that they are collecting. And I say it doesn't have to be this way. And Saskatchewan people know that it doesn't have to be this way.

Now one of the many examples of how indecisive this

government has been, Mr. Speaker, involves municipalities and hospitals; it involves school-boards; and it involves others. It's to do with the whole question of liability insurance.

Many months ago it was known by the government and Saskatchewan municipalities that the premiums for liability insurance were going out of hand. It was known that insurance companies who provide liability insurance were taking advantage of the incidences that were happening in Bhopal, and the Iran-Iraqi war, and airplanes going down and people dying in them – that insurance companies were taking advantage of those to begin to gouge people who had to buy liability insurance in parts of the world where that kind of risk did not exist, and Saskatchewan is one of them.

Over a year ago this government knew that that was happening, and for a whole year they have sat around and done nothing about it. And all the best they can do in the throne speech and in the budget speech is say, we're going to consider some solution.

Well we're still waiting for the Minister of Urban Affairs or the minister in charge of SGI to announce the solution. It's a little late because, for example, the Regina Separate School Board – headline, "Insurance to Rise at Least Double" – they're spending \$100,000 for liability insurance this year.

We have here the City of Saskatoon, municipal insurance needs, with a bill of over \$1 million for their liability insurance. You know what it was last year? It was \$370,000. And this government sits on their hands and says, we're going to study it. And they've been studying it for a year, and now when the session is on they still don't have a solution.

(1545)

Now that, Mr. Speaker, is not an example of leadership. That is an example of neglect. That is an example of a government that knows the problem is being created, and does not have the foresight or the desire to look ahead and deal with it before it affects people as seriously as this liability insurance problem is affecting too many people.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, you were once affiliated with school-boards, and you know what kind of problem that creates. And I suggest to you that a New Democratic government, if it had been the government of this province, would have dealt with this a long time ago, and we would have considered all the options.

And what is wrong with considering the option of having SGI be the provider of the insurance, liability insurance, of school-boards and municipalities and hospitals, and that the province become the reinsurer? Because we have to, as taxpayers, pick up the risk anyway, ultimately, if there is a disaster. And instead of making municipalities which are hard-pressed to meet those premiums pay those kind of atrocious premiums, the government should have acted and done something about it, and it did not.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this budget, like this government, as I said in my opening remarks, lacks credibility. It is a

budget that reflects four years of promises made and promises not kept. The numbers in this budget are not accurate and the rhetoric is not real. This budget, like this government, and like this Premier, shows no leadership. During difficult times, one of the essential ingredients is strong decisive leadership, and we don't have it in Saskatchewan today.

The budget is long on rhetoric but nothing else. Leadership, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, is not made of rhetoric. It is not made of beating one's chest and saying, I'm in control. Leadership is made of doing the kinds of things which are the right things for the right time, and not waiting until it's too late to deal with them. The Conservative Party, this Conservative government, has become so obsessed with pork barrel and patronage that it has lost sight of what governing is all about.

The New Democratic Party is ready to change that. Our party has the leadership that is proven. It has got a leadership that people know they can trust, and that's why the people of Saskatchewan in growing numbers are saying to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Advanced Education and the Premier, we have had enough, and we will not have another four years of your kind of government.

Mr. Speaker, if the board of directors of any company handled the money that shareholders put in that company the way this government has handled the money of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and the assets of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, those board of directors would be sued for fraud. There is no doubt about it.

And that's what this budget does. It's very close to that kind of a situation. Their open-for-business policies have failed. The member from Kindersley talked about small business. Well I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that everyone knows that business in Saskatchewan has not prospered under this government.

And what we hear, in spite of that failure of the open-for-business policy, we hear the Minister of Finance say the open-for-business policy is working and will be continued. And I say, if that's phase two, heaven help us in the next four years if this government is ever returned.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I, as I know my colleagues, having examined the budget with some care and finding the kind of sham and flimflam that it is, are not able to support it. It is not the kind of budget that Saskatchewan people expected to hear. It is not the kind of budget that meets the needs of the people who are saying what their needs are. It should have been better; it is not good enough; and it does not deserve to get passed in this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to engage in this very important budget debate. And it is a very important debate, Mr. Speaker, because it is undoubtedly leading up to an election, and the people of this province will have the opportunity decide whether or not they want to go forward with the policies of a Progressive Conservative government, or whether or not they want to go back to the old policies

and the old ways of the former administration.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's a very important choice. And as I speak about the budget today, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw attention to those two choices. And I want to do so by responding to the member from Regina North East who I see is just leaving his seat. Perhaps he would like to stay around and listen to a few of the comments. He harangued for almost an hour and engaged, Mr. Speaker, in distortions, the like of which I have not seen in a long time in this session.

I think perhaps the best way to respond to the comments from the member from Regina North East would be to quote, Mr. Speaker, not a federal politician, not a provincial politician, not a member of a political party, but someone who is an observer of the Saskatchewan scene. And I refer, Mr. Speaker, to the editorialist of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*. And what does the editorialist of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* say, Mr. Speaker? Does he say this was a damaging budget? Does he say it was an irresponsible budget? Does he say, Mr. Speaker, that it was not the right budget for Saskatchewan at this time, Mr. Speaker? No, he doesn't say any of those things. Mr. Speaker, here is what the editorialist of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* says, "The budget was a responsible budget."

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — The budget was a responsible budget.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to contrast that with the comments that an editorialist from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* had to say about the promises that are being offered by the Leader of the Opposition at present, as we lead up to an election, contrast the words "responsible budget" which to me, Mr. Speaker, means leadership; it means management; it means confidence; it means we can respect where this government is taking Saskatchewan, because they have the reins under control. That's what responsible means, Mr. Speaker. Contrast that to the comments that an editorialist had to describe the promises offered by the Leader of the Opposition. "Promise, promise the moon," Mr. Speaker. Promise the moon. That is what the Leader of the Opposition is doing as we lead up to an election, promising the moon.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province don't want the moon promised to them, they want a responsible budget, and that, Mr. Speaker, is what they got on budget night.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Mr. Speaker, I think we can see how responsible this budget is. If we were for a moment to compare it to the kind of budget that we likely would have received had the members opposite been in power, and then we will see a clear indication. We will have the opportunity to clearly compare what this government stands for and where we are taking this province and what the former administration would do to this province if they were back in power.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, the first thing we would have seen had the former people been in power and been

delivering the budget, we would have seen literally tens of millions of dollars being expropriated to pay for more farm land being purchased under an NDP government. That's exactly what we have seen, Mr. Speaker. We would have seen the land bank expanded dramatically. And we know that's the case, Mr. Speaker, because that's exactly what happened. That's exactly what happened when the member who just spoke on his feet indicated his comments about this particular budget. When he was minister of Finance the land bank increased dramatically, and every years funds were allocated, taxpayers' money, for the government to buy and own farm land.

And I ask the people of this province, those who are watching this telecast this afternoon: do you want the risk of an NDP government back in power which is going to take tens of millions of your dollars and use them to buy farm land? That would not create one job, Mr. Speaker. It would drive down land prices. And I can recall in 1982 when I walked the streets and knocked on doors and asked people what they thought about the government owning land, they said, that's not what Saskatchewan is all about. That's not why my forefathers came to this province.

I suggest to the people of this province that were an NDP government back in power, we would see a return again to the land bank, and that is not something that I want to see, or that my grandparents want to see, or that the young farmers of this province want to see, Mr. Speaker.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that had an NDP budget been delivered last week, we would have seen millions of dollars in that budget being allocated to buy real estate in the middle of the city of Regina for an NDP government to own. And I want to tell you why that would be the case, Mr. Speaker. Because when they were in power they poured millions of dollars to buy real estate in the city of Regina. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, today we are saddled — we are still saddled — with some of the expenditures of that government. And I wonder how many people in the province today know that that government used their tax dollars, their tax dollars — millions of their tax dollars — to buy ownership in down-town real estate transactions, Mr. Speaker, in shopping malls in the city of Regina. I question, Mr. Speaker, whether or not that is what the people of this province want.

And then, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw to your attention, and to the attention of the people of the province, some of the suggestions that are coming forward from NDP candidates in the next election. In my own constituency of Regina Rosemont, the NDP candidate is suggesting that if they were back in power what they should do, Mr. Speaker, is take taxpayers' money and set up a government-owned construction company. A government-owned construction company!

Now what would that company do, Mr. Speaker? What would that company do? I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that that company would bid on all of the construction projects in this province. That company, Mr. Speaker, would undercut all of the private contractors, all of the small-business contractors. And, Mr. Speaker, you can be

assured that if an NDP government were back in power that Crown construction corporation would be given the jobs. And what would be the result, Mr. Speaker? The result would be that the small contractor in this province, the people that employ hundreds and thousands of small people in this province, Mr. Speaker, who work in those businesses – they would be gone, Mr. Speaker. The NDP instead would once again be building their shrine of big government.

And should anyone wonder, Mr. Speaker, if that is the case, I would be happy to provide any member of this Assembly or any citizen of this province with the document of the NDP candidate from Regina Rosemont, which said we want a government-owned construction company which is going to compete against the construction companies that already exist in this province.

What kind of risk, Mr. Speaker, what kind of a risk is Saskatchewan going to have if an NDP government were back in power?

Mr. Speaker, that same candidate from Regina Rosemont, that same NDP candidate who is going to oppose me in the next election, what else does he say, Mr. Speaker? What else does he say?

Not only does he say that we should have budgets which set up government-owned construction companies, but he says the Government of Saskatchewan should take over all of the privately owned potash mines in the province, Mr. Speaker. The government already owns 50 per cent – but that's not enough. Now, Mr. Speaker, an NDP government, if they were bringing down a budget, we might very well see funds expropriated from the taxpayer to take over all of the potash mines in the province.

Not only are they going to fight against the small-business contractor, but now they're going to run out of this province all of the privately owned potash companies. And once again, Mr. Speaker, this province will have a reputation of driving business away – not of attracting investment, not of being on the side of ventures that create business, but driving them away.

Mr. Speaker, the risks are simply too great. I don't want to see Saskatchewan once again have that reputation. I don't want to see the small contractor driven out of business. I don't want to see our tax dollars expropriated to take over businesses and, in so doing, not have one new job created, Mr. Speaker.

(1600)

Those are the risks, Mr. Speaker. If that were an NDP budget that had been delivered last week, I suggest to you that we would have seen a category of revenue that would have seen an ever-increasing amount of money coming back to the government through an ever-escalating gas tax, Mr. Speaker, an ever-escalating gas tax.

Today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, today in the city of Regina the citizens of the capital city of this province enjoy the

lowest gasoline prices in the Dominion of Canada. The lowest gasoline prices in the Dominion of Canada, and one of the primary reasons is because this province no longer has a gas tax, Mr. Speaker – no longer has a gas tax. Mr. Speaker, if we had seen an NDP budget brought down last week, that would not be the case. They believed in a gas tax, Mr. Speaker, and I suspect we would very well see that gas tax back again. That is one of the risks that come with an NDP party.

But what are the other risks, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I recall that not that long ago the NDP party in Saskatchewan invited the Finance minister from the province of Manitoba, an NDP Finance minister, to come to this province and to talk about the programs of that particular government.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that one of the means that the NDP government in Manitoba uses to raise revenue is an employee tax. I'm seriously concerned, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if he members opposite were to ever form government in this province, that one of the new taxes that we would see here would be an employee tax – a tax that would hurt small business; a tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that would indeed put some small businesses out of operation. An employee tax, Mr. Speaker, ever escalating gas taxes, taking over more potash mines, setting up government-owned construction companies, spending millions of dollars to buy land bank for the government to own, spending millions of dollars for the government to own real estate in shopping malls.

I wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if those are the kinds of things that the people of Saskatchewan really want. Well I would suggest to the people of this province, I would suggest to my constituents that if we were ever to see that happen in this province, that it would take a long time, Mr. Speaker, to return to the forward-looking progressive visionary policies that we presently have in place today.

When I think, Mr. Speaker, of what the members opposite have talked about during the last few weeks, we have to ask ourselves – and I think, Mr. Speaker, this is the real question that comes of this budget. The real question that comes out of this budget is: who best can build the future of Saskatchewan? Who best can build the future of Saskatchewan? And when I see the members opposite saying that, we are opposed to the Gainers plant in North Battleford, we are opposed to a project, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is going to create literally hundreds of jobs in North Battleford and in the surrounding region . . . But the NDP members opposite are opposed to Gainers.

But is that all they are opposed to, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We hear the members opposite saying and being very critical of the recently announced major initiative in the city of Prince Albert – opposed, Mr. Speaker, to an initiative which is going to create literally hundreds and hundreds of jobs in Prince Albert and in northern Saskatchewan. But they are opposed to it. They are opposed to it because someone from outside of the province is going to come here because they have confidence and they're going to invest hundreds of millions of dollars here. But they are opposed because they don't have a Crown corporation that can do it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what does the editorialist of the *Leader-Post* have to say about this particular project? They say, Mr. Speaker, that enticing such a world-renowned corporate entity to come to Saskatchewan, they say it has all the appearance of being a *coup* for Saskatchewan; all of the appearance of being a major success for Saskatchewan; all of the appearance of building for the future; all of the appearance of creating jobs and opportunity for literally hundreds and hundreds of people in the province. But the members opposite, what is their response? Do they say, that's good for the province? Do they say, yes, it really was a major *coup*? No, Mr. Speaker, they stand opposed to it. They stand opposed.

So now we have them opposed to the bacon plant in North Battleford. Now we have them opposed to the paper mill in Prince Albert. And what else do we have them opposed to, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Having spent \$600 million of our money to buy uranium mines, they now say that, we are going to close the mines down – and in so doing, ruin our reputation as a trading partner with nations in the world; and in so doing, make it more difficult for us to trade our products throughout the world; and in so doing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, waste literally hundreds of millions of our dollars, and more importantly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, lose hundreds of jobs for the province of Saskatchewan.

So now, Mr. Speaker, they have closed down the Gainers plant; they have closed down the new P.A. pulp and paper project; they shut down the uranium mines. But that's not the end – that's not the end, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now today we heard the Leader of the Opposition again speaking critically of the Rafferty dam project, a project which will create literally hundreds and hundreds of jobs. A project, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that will create recreational opportunities for the people of this province that were never there before. A project, Mr. Speaker, that is going to provide flood control for the people of this province and our neighbours to the south. A project that shows that this government can work with the United States government to provide the kind of forward-looking initiatives that we need. But what do the members opposite say? They say no. No, we are opposed. No, we are opposed to Gainers. We are opposed to the P.A. pulp project. We are opposed to the uranium mines. We are opposed to the Rafferty dam project.

Mr. Speaker, I suspect that by now they have just admitted that they are opposed to literally thousands of new jobs being created in this province – thousands of new jobs being created in this province. But that's not all they're opposed to. And I think in all fairness, the people of this province need to know.

And the member of this government who spoke earlier on today indicated that the members opposite are opposed to our oil recovery program, a program that has created literally hundreds of jobs – thousands in this province indeed – and a program which is making possible an oil upgrader for the city of Regina. That oil upgrader has the potential to create thousands of jobs over the long term. But I can assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if the oil

patch is shut down in this province, that the oil upgrader is also going to be shut down, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So now we have them opposed to Gainers, to the pulp mill, to the uranium mines, to the Rafferty dam. They're going to put in jeopardy also the upgrader which will create thousands of jobs. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the risks that are associated with an NDP government are risks that no reasonable, sound-thinking person would say are risks that they want this province to take. Certainly not.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only do we have the loss of jobs that would come into place from the members opposite, but we would see a dramatically increasing deficit under the members opposite. We have just seen the Leader of the Opposition make promises, knowing full well that no provincial government in this country would ever be able to find the money to finance those promises unless they dramatically raise taxes. He knows that.

He knows he's promising the moon. He knows he promising the moon, and so does the editorialist from the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix* know that he's promising the moon. And I think any reasonable, intelligent person knows that that is not a responsible approach to government. That is not the right way to go at this time in the province of Saskatchewan.

People don't want the moon promised to them, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They want responsible government delivered to them. And when we talk about Gainers and we talk about the P.A. pulp mill, when we talk about Rafferty dam, when we talk about the oil upgrader, that's responsible government. That's building for the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think we have to ask ourselves: who best can provide the kind of opportunity and protection to the people of this province? Is it going to be an NDP government? Well then we have to ask ourselves: can they work with small business to create jobs? Because we all know that most jobs today are in fact created by small business. The latest figure I heard, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was 88 per cent of all new jobs created by small business.

So now let's ask ourselves the simple question: who best can work with small business to create jobs in the province of Saskatchewan? Mr. Deputy Speaker, an NDP government is well-known for its anti-business philosophy. The NDP government in Manitoba has an employee tax which hurts small business. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government – this government – in this budget, just brought in an interest rate relief program which will provide 8 per cent money to small businesses – a clear indication of our support for small business.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this budget we introduced the innovate two-year tax holiday for those who wish to start up any new small business in the province of Saskatchewan. Because we really do believe in small business. The members opposite believe in big government, not small business, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What about opportunity? If small business now has the opportunity to grow and to expand and they have secure

protection from high interest rates with this 8 per cent program, what about students, Mr. Deputy Speaker? In this budget, mention was made of our commitment to provide money at 6 per cent for students to attend post-secondary institutions — certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a very clear commitment of this government's intention to provide opportunity for the students of this particular province.

What about education in general, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We were the government which last year introduced the innovative educational development fund — a five-year program to provide new dollars over and above regular operating funds to enhance the education programs in the province of Saskatchewan. And this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that figure increased from \$10 million to well over \$30 million — a substantial indication of our commitment to provide sound, forward-looking education to the students of this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about providing opportunity, I think we also need to talk at the same time about providing protection for people. Opportunity is one track on which this government runs. The other track is protection. And we began in 1982, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by providing mortgage interest rate protection to 40,000 home owners in the province of Saskatchewan in order that they could keep their homes during times of high interest.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what do we see? We see a Leader of the Opposition who decides perhaps he should get on the bandwagon as well and provide interest rate protection. The only thing is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not sure he really believes in it. But even more importantly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where were the NDP in 1982 when people really needed interest rate relief? Where were they? Mr. Deputy Speaker, they could have done something. They chose not to.

(1615)

Instead, they spent money on land bank. They spent money on 101 other projects that really weren't a high priority for the people of this province. Interest rate protection was then a high priority because people were losing their homes. Today people are not losing their homes, but the member opposite says, today we will provide interest rate protection.

I suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is four years late — four years late. And the reason why they're late, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is because it is this government that is providing, developing, implementing the kinds of sound initiatives, forward-looking policies that this province of Saskatchewan really needs. And a good example of that mentioned in this budget speech is the new Saskatchewan pension plan.

I had the opportunity on the weekend, Mr. Speaker, to sit down with two constituents who came into my constituency office and wanted some information on this new pension plan. He happens to be a person who works in the construction business and his work is seasonal. He said, it sure would be good, it sure would be good if I had

a pension plan that I could put money away when I'm at work, year after year after year, and his wife, a home-maker. He said it sure would be good if we had the opportunity to put some funds away in order that I had a pension when I was older.

Then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they asked the question: why didn't this ever happen before in the province of Saskatchewan? Why didn't we have a Saskatchewan pension plan for home owners and for farmers, and for people who work in small business, and for part-time workers? Why didn't we ever have a Saskatchewan pension plan? I suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reason why we never had a Saskatchewan pension plan — because the members opposite never really did seriously concern themselves with the affairs of true families. They were more concerned about the family of Crown corporations, Mr. Deputy Speaker, more concerned about taking \$600 million of my money and the money of the visitors up in the gallery today and the members who are watching on television, the members of this province — taking 600 million of their dollars to buy uranium mines — more interested in taking tens of millions of dollars each year to spend money to buy land bank. Some pension. Some pension that was for the home owners and for the small-business people and for the farmers of this province. Some pension.

They were more interested, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in taking tens of millions of dollars and buying real estate in some shopping mall in down-town Regina than they were in providing a pension for home owners and small-business people and farmers in this province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, they were not seriously concerned then about the families of Saskatchewan, and when I see the Leader of the Opposition making his outlandish promises in an attempt to win back power, I seriously question whether or not he is truly interested in the families of Saskatchewan today,

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I take a look at the budget, I see another initiative. I see another initiative, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that relates directly, directly to the interests of families in Regina Rosemont; in your seat, Mr. Deputy Speaker; it relates directly to the visitors who are here today and to those people across this province who are watching this telecast. I want to ask NDP members opposite and I want to ask the members of the Assembly, and I ask the citizens of this province: did you ever have the opportunity, under the NDP, to go down to your local clothier and to pick out a dress or to pick out a pair of shoes and to take it to the cash register and to take out your wallet and to put your money down and say, it sure is good not to have to pay sales tax on clothing in the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Did they ever provide the citizens of this province with the opportunity to buy clothing and not pay a sales tax? Never. Never, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the NDP was in power and people took out their cheque-book and decided it was time to pay their power bill again at the end of the month, did they ever have an opportunity, when they paid that bill, to say, it sure is good that we don't have to pay the sales tax on our power bills any more? Under the

members opposite, they had to pay sales tax on power.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, under the members opposite we all remember – how could we ever forget – that ever-escalating gas tax. Day after day people would go to the pumps in this province and they would fill up and they would say, how come the government has to gouge us with such high gasoline prices and such a high gas tax?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, during the last four years the people of this province have not had to pay a gas tax and that is why in the city of Regina today the gasoline prices are the lowest anywhere in Canada – the lowest gasoline prices anywhere in Canada. So now we have the lowest gasoline prices. We have no . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. The members realize that whether they are in the debate or not, they are not to call other members liars, and I would ask that those members who are guilty of that to please desist.

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for drawing attention to those unfortunate remarks.

The people of Saskatchewan today do not pay a provincial gas tax; they don't pay sales tax on their utility bills; they don't pay sales tax on clothing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wonder what would happen in this province, what kind of tax increases we would see, if the members opposite were to get back in power. Did they ever reduce the income tax? Not once. From 37 to 39 to 42 and on and on – up to 51 per cent the income tax went when the NDP was in power. Never once did they reduce the income tax. But they did put on a succession tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Remember that odious death tax – because that's what it was – a repugnant death tax that they levied on the citizens of this province to the tune of 25 to \$27 million. They never rebated it back to the people of this province; never gave it back to the people of this province.

Succession tax; gas tax going up; sales tax going up. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't want to see that happen again in the province of Saskatchewan, do you? You don't want to see a succession tax back in the province of Saskatchewan. If you saw a succession tax back in the province of Saskatchewan, you know what the people would say? We don't want the NDP back, we don't want the NDP back.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the NDP were back we wouldn't see a pension plan for farmers and home owners and small-business people. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the sales tax would be back on clothing. We would likely see a gas tax back in the province. We would see the land bank back in the operation again here in the province of Saskatchewan. We would see a Crown corporation set up to compete with small contractors here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the risks associated with an NDP government are simply too great for this province to bear, simply too great for this province to bear. We have to decide, and the members in this budget debate have to

decide when they vote on this budget: do we want to see Gainers go ahead in North Battleford? Do we want to see the uranium mines continue to mine and trade and create revenue for the province of Saskatchewan? Do we want to see the upgrader go ahead in the city of Regina? Do we want to see enhanced trade for the province of Saskatchewan with the countries of the world? Is that what we want to see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or do we want to see jobs lost and the province of Saskatchewan shut down?

That's the issue that we're voting on in this budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I suggest to you, and I suggest to all members opposite, that if we want to see this province go forward, if we want to see vision and initiative and opportunity and jobs created, we have no opportunity, Mr. Speaker, but to vote for this budget and say yes. We have no opportunity, no other option. If we were to do otherwise, Mr. Speaker, we would be going backward, not forward. And I don't think anybody in this Assembly wants to go backward.

Perhaps the members opposite think that going back to a land bank is a good idea, but I don't think so. Perhaps they think that shutting down the uranium mines is a good thing to do, but I don't think so. Perhaps they think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that losing those literally thousands of jobs on those major projects that I've talked about today – jobs for our young people – that that is a good thing. I seriously suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this is not a good thing. I don't think anybody in this province really wants to see those jobs lost. I would suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when you consider the job record . . .

An Hon. Member: — Especially George Hill. Especially Peter Pocklington. They don't want to lose their jobs.

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — The member opposite talks about jobs. The member opposite, the NDP member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, talks about jobs. I suggest that he have the respect to be quiet for a minute and I will tell him about the NDP job record and the job record of this government.

From October '79 to October '81, a three-year period under your administration, the editorialist researcher from the *Leader-Post* has dug up the facts and has indicated to the public that there were 4,000 permanent jobs created under your administration during those three years – 4,000.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will take another three-year period, October 1982 to October 1985, under this administration. That same *Leader-Post* researcher who said that there were 4,000 jobs created during that last three years of your administration has said: the following number of jobs were created in the province of Saskatchewan during a comparable three-year period . . . Did he say 4,000? No. Did he say 14,000? No. Did he say 18,000? No. Mr. Deputy Speaker, he said 21,000 permanent jobs were created in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would suggest that's performance. That's leadership. That's building for the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's creating opportunity for young people. Four thousand permanent jobs under the NDP; 21,000 under a Progressive Conservative government — permanent jobs.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we could talk about part-time jobs, but I don't think they would really want to hear the part-time job record because unfortunately they created more part-time jobs than they did full-time jobs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see the Leader of the Opposition has returned and perhaps as I close I would simply draw attention. . . Again, as I close, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will draw our attention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the NDP members opposite could be quiet for a minute — they will have their opportunity to rise and stand in debate — I will draw the members of this House to the following facts: the editorialist of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* has characterized the Leader of the Opposition as promising the moon. That's not responsible. That's not good management. That builds the deficit. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not what the people of Saskatchewan want. They don't the Leader of the Opposition — they don't want anybody — to promise the moon.

(1630)

What do they want, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They want what the editorialist from that same newspaper said: this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a responsible budget. Promise the moon or a responsible budget? That's the choice that we have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I have no question whatsoever that the members of this Assembly will vote in favour of a responsible budget instead of promising the moon.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Bacon: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today in support of a budget that was delivered by my hon. colleague from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden on Wednesday last, a budget of foresight, a budget of responsibility, and indeed a budget with a firm grip on the reality of this province.

In my remarks this afternoon, I would like to address the women's place in this province with this government: the promises that have been made and have been kept and are being made now; the credibility of the Leader of the Opposition and his party; but most of all, I would like to address the decorum in this House.

The members of the NDP would have the people of Saskatchewan believe that it was the Premier of this province and the Progressive Conservative Party that is now the government that brought the grasshoppers to Saskatchewan; that brought the wheat midge to Saskatchewan; that ordered the drought in the South and the rains in the North; that flooded the potash market so prices are low; that is involved in the crisis of the oil right now. Well I say to the member from Quill Lakes, if we can

make it rain in the North and keep it dry in the South, the people had best elect us forever.

The people of Saskatchewan know the truth, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and as I quote from that famous political columnist in the Regina *Leader-Post* — and he's speaking about the Leader of the Opposition — and he says, he obviously has no plans to reduce the deficit. He said that:

On budget night when asked if he thought the \$1.9 billion deficit would be the "major issue" in the campaign, Blakeney said he thought not.

He's quoted as saying:

"The people still believe the government's credit is good, and is for awhile at least," Blakeney said. Long enough apparently for the NDP to let a quest for power override any sense of what is responsible politics.

Mr. Speaker, I'm a rookie politician in this legislature, and I'm a simple person. I do not have a degree in education, a degree in economics, a degree in agriculture, a degree in law. I am a wife. I'm a home-maker; and I'm a mother. And I can only speak to you simply because I am one of those ordinary people.

The Conservative government has had a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan to build a better quality of life for them, and that commitment has been upheld. We protected the people against high interest rates which has allowed the families to remain in their homes. We allowed for the family farm to be protected, and the people have remained productive and optimistic. And we've allowed small-business men to employ fresh new faces, Mr. Speaker, in the private sector — the private sector that has created the 22,000 jobs. Fresh faces, Mr. Speaker, that are eager to work and who are denied that opportunity by members opposite.

People were denied the opportunity to become productive and independent individuals because the previous administration did not believe in small business. They do not believe in free enterprise and they do not believe in people. And they do not believe in the people of — anyone in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And the people of Saskatchewan no longer believe in them.

In 1982, the people elected a government, Mr. Speaker, a Progressive Conservative government, a government committed to families and to farmers, small-business men, and to home owners, and most recently to home-makers and women. The government is committed to the individual and the individuals from all walks of life.

There are more jobs now than there were when we took power. There are more people in the work-force than when we took power. There are more people living in this province than when we took power. And that is not to the credit of the NDP administration.

Let me speak briefly, Mr. Speaker, about my constituency of Saskatoon Nutana. We are located bordering on the river in Saskatoon. It is the original Saskatoon, full of lovely character homes and trees. It is served by Nutana

Collegiate, which is one of the high schools, and Aden Bowman Collegiate, both which lie outside the provincial boundaries of my riding but none the less do a credible job. And I believe to some extent Holy Cross services the separate schools.

I have many senior citizens living in my riding, Mr. Speaker, and they are now living an enriched life far beyond their greatest expectation for their golden years. And I'll refer to these later, Mr. Speaker.

Nutana also hosts an MLA office –first ever that we can find a record of within the constituency boundaries – where people can come to their MLA to see them, or even telephone them and know that somebody is there. And not only do we have an MLA office, Mr. Speaker, within the boundaries of Nutana, but my constituency also hosts the member of parliament for Saskatoon East, the Hon. Don Ravis, who is located just across the street and most convenient to the people of Nutana.

I would like to repeat in point form, Mr. Speaker, some of the initiatives of this government that have resulted in prosperity for Saskatoon: there is funding for the new Saskatoon multi-purpose arena; Canpotex, the international marketing agency for the potash, moved its head office from Toronto to Saskatoon; a \$7 million refurbishment of the Western Development Museum. Eight new child care incorporations in Saskatoon alone have provided pre-school and day care services to 300 families; a new \$17 million cancer clinic; a new geological sciences building; a \$78 million world-class agriculture building; a science research unit; a \$31 million College of Engineering building.

Twenty-eight new advanced technology firms have located in Saskatoon since 1982; over \$2.9 million worth of planned and ongoing hospital construction since 1982; \$41.2 million worth of school construction and renovations have taken place; 433 special care home beds being constructed under the five-year special home care construction program; \$2.7 million for the Kinsmen's children's centre; \$40 million in science and technology research; 1,230 new jobs created through the Saskatchewan employment development program; 1,500 increase in day care spaces in Saskatoon; \$354,000 in grants to senior citizens and their organizations; expansion and renovation to Kilburn Hall youth centre; \$11 million in grants to organizations in support of the handicapped; \$20 million, nearly, in urban assistance from the Department of Highways. And over 10,390 families in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, were protected by our idea to buy down the interest rates and put in the thirteen and a quarter mortgage interest reduction plan. In 1989, Saskatoon will play host to the summer games. And \$24.5 million for a 240-bed special care nursing home, the largest in the province's history.

Saskatoon has done well under the leadership of the Premier and the Progressive Conservatives, and they can look forward to an optimistic future.

But I want to talk a little bit about some of the rhetoric we've been hearing on the streets and on the radios and in the media about promises. And, Mr. Speaker, our government, my government, has been accused of not

keeping promises that we made in 1982.

The facts are and the truth of the matter is: did we not keep the promises made in 1982, or were circumstances such that it was impractical to keep them at that time? Were we able to keep all the promises? And have we made mistakes, Mr. Speaker? Well, yes we have. We have made mistakes. But let me tell the members of the opposition that the only men that go around and don't make mistakes are the men that do nothing.

We didn't promise, Mr. Speaker, in 1982, a drought. And we didn't promise a new City Hospital. And we didn't promise a grasshopper infestation. And we didn't promise a provincial pension plan. And we didn't promise depressed potash markets. And we didn't promise enforced maintenance orders. And we didn't promise poor oil prices. And we didn't promise the senior citizens, the seniors' heritage program.

We didn't promise the second lowest unemployment in the country; we promised lower unemployment. And we didn't promise an opportunity to get out of the welfare trap. And we didn't promise to increase the work-force and the population. And we didn't promise to establish the Women's Secretariat. And we didn't promise to control the spending on Executive Council. And we didn't promise an open-arm approach to Henry Morgentaler. And we didn't promise to increase the utility rates at the whim of the cabinet.

And what didn't you promise the people? You didn't promise to nationalize the potash mines. And you didn't promise to open and buy and then close the uranium mines. And you didn't promise to bleed the equity out of the Crown corporations. And you didn't promise to drain the pension funds to balance your budget.

And what you promised since? What do the resolutions from the NDP party say? That they're going to expropriate previous provincial assets for a one dollar bill. And what else have they promised by resolution? Is there going to be a tax on gas? They are promising no Rafferty dam, no Gainers plant, no expansion of the P.A. pulp mill, no agriculture building, no Opportunities '86 and perhaps '87, no more jobs up North for the uranium workers . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Are you going to promise to help the homosexual community? Are you? I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the Leader of the Opposition, that a fox may change his colour but his habits never do.

There is no credibility in his promises. There is no credibility in what he says. And I quote from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, Mr. Speaker, about their latest little prize that they've put under the Christmas tree. It's written by Les MacPherson, and I'm sorry I don't have the date:

Now the NDP program (this is the 7-7-7-7) is worth 175.6 million annually, and that seems to be a very conservative estimate. Costs will be much higher if interest rates go up, and they might do that at any moment.

And what happens if interest rates are high in seven years when the program is due to expire? Will thousands of Saskatchewan families suddenly find themselves living in homes they can't possibly afford? Blakeney claims that additional government revenue generated by activity in the housing sector will almost totally cover the program's costs.

I have been unable to find a single industry insider who believes that to be true. Most regard the NDP scheme as a blatant attempt to buy votes.

And while we're talking of promises let me refresh your memory. Let me refresh your memory. And it was recently stated in this House by the member from Regina North West who is a chameleon, who is changing his colours, to see whose soul he can buy at the time. Did you promise a gift tax and the succession duties that were removed in 1977? The gift tax cost the people \$875,000, and the succession duty, the tax on the dead, cost another \$26 million. The total of those two promises that you made or did not make, according to what was most convenient for you, came to \$39 million. Was that a mistake? Was that a mistake?

I say that your position on the tax on used cars is distasteful and cowardly. And again, I quote Mr. Greenshields from the *Star-Phoenix* that so eloquently put off the Leader of the Opposition, "Something old and something new and something borrowed and something blue, the old bride of Dracula."

And I have some questions for the members of the opposition, just a few simple . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . They would have to be for you to understand them. Why did you leave thousands of rural families facing high home heating costs and not give them natural gas? What did you say to our seniors by placing a moratorium on nursing home construction that the member from Shaunavon so selectively forgot this morning in Saskatoon? And why did the NDP leave the seniors to fend for themselves with only a \$5 increase in their income supplement for 10 years? And why did the Leader of the Opposition want to reinstate the gasoline tax? Why did the NDP reduce patient days in hospitals by 5 per cent resulting in the lost of 400 staff?

(1645)

Why do they want to shut down our oil industry? Why did they want to spend millions of dollars on uranium mines and then close them down? Why did they not help farmers during the drought of 1980? Why did they not help home owners when interest rates were 22 per cent? And why did the Leader of the NDP, in 1979, say that helping farmers and small businesses battle interest rates was, quote "not appropriate"? Why is the NDP bankrupt of ideas and now copying our government to try and fulfil election promises? Even their slogan, "Stand up for Saskatchewan," had to be borrowed from a younger socialist to our east. You only quote from younger socialists because you're bankrupt of ideas.

In 1982, Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Party

made a commitment to Saskatchewan. When the sky-rocketing rates were there and inflation was tough, we came through. And when young farmers could not own their land, we helped them. And when the economic exorcists of the opposition party next door were gone, we brought incentive and investment into the province. And Crown corporations that were out of control were being made to run accountably and run like a business. The SGI auto fund is even balanced now, and hospitals that were in disrepair and too small have been made larger, and nursing home construction is going full tilt and not halted. The university buildings in Regina and Saskatoon were inadequate and we have helped them there and the financial position of this problem has been seriously misrepresented by the members opposite.

With the socialist-controlled tax dollars of the last 12 or 11 years in Saskatchewan, dollars flew into potash mines and land bank and everything they could get their hands on, but there were no new jobs. You have no credibility. You suggest to this House some imaginative accounting the night of the budget or the day after, some imaginative accounting will balance the budget, will make the P.A. pulp mill look profitable or will not look profitable. I say to you and to the Leader of the Opposition that it is your party that has the skills; it is your party that has the motives, the expertise, and the scruples to teach a class in mathematical gymnastics.

And did we promise, Mr. Speaker, that we would stop building if it didn't rain or if it rained too much of if the grasshoppers came or revenues were down? We still removed the gas tax. We still put in the mortgage protection plan. We still put in the farm purchase program. We made the Crown corporations more efficient. We increased health spending. Yes, we did.

And what did we do about the families, the real people of Saskatchewan, people much like myself and my husband and children? In 1982, as a point of interest, Mr. Speaker, the average age of the Conservative government was 38. The average age of members opposite was 48. So you tell me, Mr. Speaker, who is more in tune to the needs of young women and young men with young children than someone who has them at home right now? We have provided over \$13 million for day care funding in 1986; that's a 9 per cent increase. And for the first time, we're providing a direct operating grant to day care centres. And the seniors citizens' heritage program is almost \$40 million. And there was a 25 million, five-year senior citizens' home repair program for senior citizens. And we ended the moratorium on nursing home construction. We have built over 2,000 senior citizens' housing units, and we have an additional 540 housing units that will be supported. All clothing, all footwear, all yard goods valued at less than 300, is exempt from sales tax, and this saves the people but a mere \$23 million.

And in 1972, Mr. Speaker, to 1982 the former NDP administration increased Executive Council expenditures by 280 per cent, an increase of 28 per cent a year. When they took power in 1971 the expenditures were in excess of \$2.2 million, and by 1982 they were well in excess of 6. That is no longer the case, Mr. Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition, in his opening remarks in reply to the budget, set a precedent that we could talk about nearly anything we wanted to when were on our feet. So I would like to go back to a few things that have happened.

I want to talk about the impaired driving and the moves that have been made by this government to stop the problem. This government, on the initiative of the Department of Highways, has got the highest fine in the country for driving while suspended, a full \$500. And it was the PC federal government in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, a PC federal government, that brought in tougher restrictions and tougher laws and tougher penalties for those convicted of impaired driving.

And it was the PC government in this province that launched the ad campaign in the liquor stores, on the key chains, and on the billboards of "Impaired driving – we're all responsible." And what did that do, Mr. Speaker? What did that do? Well, I'll tell you. In 1984 we lost 86 people on the highways; and in 1985, up to December 31st, we lost only 77. So the impaired driving problem is not cured, but it is being addressed, and that is far more than the members opposite ever even imagined they could.

And who raised the issue of impaired driving in this Chamber? Was it members of the opposition? Was it members of the opposition, any of the boys? In the last 11 years, no. It was a woman, Mr. Speaker.

And that brings me to a short little talk about the women in this government, the women in this province, and the role they have to play. There are more women on boards and commissions with this government than ever before. There is a Women's Secretariat.

On behalf of women we now have in force maintenance orders. And the senior citizens, most whom are widows, are living far better with greater tax benefits than they ever had before.

It happened to be a woman in this province, Mr. Speaker, that encouraged the adoption of the international child abduction Act, for it is women mostly, Mr. Speaker, that are searching for missing children.

We have more women in cabinet. And who is operating Child Find in Saskatchewan? It is women. And who is doing it in British Columbia? It is women. And who is doing it in Alberta? It is women.

And who is the best behaved and most respectful members of this House? It is the women.

The women's problems have been addressed by subsidies for day cares to help single parents. Who traditionally monitor the school and education? It is the mothers. And who nurses the ill in the family? It is the women. And who nurses the ill in the hospital? It is the women. And who is getting greater help in the hospitals? It is the nurses, Mr. Speaker. And who is getting a pension plan for home-makers? It is women. And who has been relieved by welfare reform from the constant treadmill of

being on welfare? It helps the women.

If ever a government radiated a pastel contempt for women, and was treasonous to the women of this province, it was the NDP. And I want to tell you a little bit about the NDP women. And I wish the member from Assiniboia would wake up.

At the throne speech, Mr. Speaker – and I think this is not too difficult – at the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, there are 64 members present. Okay? My spouse recognizes all members and most of their spouses himself. But having said that, there are only five women. So 59 people you know wear suits and trousers and the other five wear skirts – not too difficult.

This is my year of election, Mr. Speaker, my year of election. And when we were walking into your Speaker's tea in room 218, the wife of the member from Assiniboia said to me, where are you from? And I said, well I'm from Saskatoon. She said, how nice of you to drive down for this. I said, I come to them all. I'm an MLA. And she said, well I don't pay much attention to what goes on there. How interested in the careers of women politicians in this province can they be if their own wives don't even know who the sitting members are?

And let me tell you another little story about the women in the NDP party, Mr. Speaker. And this comes from the lips of one of their candidates, and she just happens to be running against me. And it took place at a women's council meeting in Saskatoon, a public meeting where there was Pat Atkinson of the NDP, Evelyn Bacon of the PC, and one Maureen Darling who was a federal Liberal and a provincial Liberal candidate. And what did Ms. Atkinson . . . (inaudible) . . . say at this meeting about her role in the NDP party? She said that the old boys club of my party make it impossible for the women to win a nomination if the seat can possibly go to the NDP. They stop us.

And what else did she say? She said, we tried to set up a fund across Canada to help young candidates who had children to run their homes and have help there and have child care. And it fell flat on its face. Pat Atkinson, NDP candidate, Saskatoon-Nutana. She's not a member.

So I'm telling you, if there's any fudging from the truth, Mr. Speaker, it perhaps comes from the members who sit opposite. If there is any future for the women in the party of the NDP, let me tell you that it will not be a claim of theirs but a concession of yours out of shame and your disrespect for it.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the decorum in this House. During question period today, Mr. Speaker, as occurs on most days, I could not hear my Premier nor my Deputy Premier, and most often not the Leader of the Opposition even with an amplifier in my ear – even with an amplifier in my ear. So if I want facts or want to know what is said, I have to read *Hansard* the next day.

I don't like not being able to hear my own leader and I don't like not being able to hear members opposite. And I think some words recorded in *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker, in this House, are long overdue. In my opinion, the

opposition has acted disgracefully and shamefully by their behaviour, not only to members on this side of the House, but even to their own colleagues. They appear to be full of contempt for this House and disrespect for their members. They are so badly behaved, Mr. Speaker, that their own leader even publicly chastised one of his own to be quiet so he can continue, right in this House. And yet again, after a recorded scolding by their own leader in this Chamber, on budget night, with the amplifier in my ear, Mr. Speaker, I could not hear what the Minister of Finance was saying, as they babbled and howled as they continue to do now.

The worst-behaved people I have ever met, Mr. Speaker, are those that know they're wrong. I came elected to this legislature, Mr. Speaker, with great expectations. Many have been met, and many surpassed. But the behaviour that you tolerate in this House is shameful and lacks any respect. I want all the people in Saskatchewan to be aware and to be able to identify the cliché of deplorable behaviour and where it comes from. It comes from the nine male members of the NDP party who were elected to this legislature and who attack all of us at any time we are on our feet. And let the people of Saskatchewan know, I resent their behaviour and I resent the tarring that I've received from the brush that they hold, because I am a politician. Their conduct has tainted me and I don't like it.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP party and their leader have been fully exposed nearly to what they really are. The member from Elphinstone has gone from a statesman to Moon Doggy to Crazy Al, and now one of the most desperate of all politicians in this province. You see, Mr. Speaker, politicians think only about the next election, but it is statesmen who watch out for the next generation.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker, I say that I have only three wishes or dreams to be fulfilled as the generations follow. The first one is members of the NDP learn to hone their accuracy on the truth when they attempt to repeat it; secondly, that members in this House learn to act respectfully and with some dignity; and thirdly, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan can annually receive a budget as responsible and realistic as the ones presented by my colleagues. I will support the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLaren: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And once again it's a pleasure for me to stand in this Assembly and take part in the budget debate and, Mr. Speaker, a budget that I would consider a common-sense budget. I wish to commend my colleague, the Minister of Finance, and the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden for a most excellent presentation of our government's budget, and the formation of a most realistic and common-sense budget.

Mr. Speaker, I spent four more enjoyable days back in my constituency of Yorkton over the Easter weekend. And needless to say, I did a lot of checking around our constituency and found very few constituents who did not think that it was a tremendous budget and a common-sense budget and one that we could all be proud of.

The people in the Yorkton constituency understand full well that sound economic growth is responsible for the well-being of our society. Economic growth is a stimulus to provide jobs and prosperity to support the social institutions necessary for our forward-looking and caring society. We must encourage and assist wherever possible, Mr. Speaker, our small-business community, our farmers, and the development of our rich natural resources, and in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, this budget does just that.

We believe strongly that big government, the philosophy of the members opposite, is not the answer. The majority of the people in the province of Saskatchewan detest the heavy yoke of government around their necks. And if there is one, if there's one remark that I've heard consistently since being a MLA, it is: for Pete's sake, get the government off our backs and let us get on with the job. And this is the comment that I heard when I was electioneering back in 1982. They don't want governments dictating every move and regulating the living breath out of all of us. And creating a positive climate towards business is a must if we are to promote and encourage the economic development of our business community, Mr. Speaker.

And our budget confirms our commitment to create a positive climate: an 8 per cent maximum interest protection rate for small businesses up to a maximum loan limit of \$100,000, which has been increased from the 50,000 to \$100,000; a two-year corporate tax holiday for new small businesses.

I can think back when I started with my own private business in 1975. Would I have ever loved to have that kind of consideration when I was starting up a small business as well.

A stock savings plan to encourage equity investment by Saskatchewan residents. This plan is part of our continuing emphasis to encourage public participation in the Saskatchewan economy.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.