

April 3, 1986

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Non-Controversial Bills

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills, I present the 13th report of the said committee which is as follows:

Bill No. 3 — An Act to amend The Change of Name Act

Mr. Shillington: — As chairman of the Non-Controversial Bills Committee, I wish to report Bill No. 3, An Act to amend The Change of Name Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 7 — An Act to amend The Statute Law

Mr. Shillington: — As chairman of the Non-Controversial Bills Committee, Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 7, An Act to amend The Statute Law, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 9 — An Act to amend The Lloydminster Hospital Act, 1948

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Non-Controversial Bills Committee, I wish to report Bill No. 9, An Act to amend The Lloydminster Hospital Act, 1948, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading and consideration in committee of whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 10 — An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Non-Controversial Bills Committee, I wish to report Bill No. 10, An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 11 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Environmental Management and Protection Act

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Non-Controversial Bills Committee, I wish to report Bill No. 11, An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Environmental Management and Protection Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. member, I move that second reading and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Gerich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the Legislative Assembly, on behalf of my colleague, the Hon. Neal Hardy, the Minister of Rural Development and the member from Kelsey-Tisdale, a group of 24 air cadets seated in the Speaker's gallery. The cadets are from grades 7 to 12, and belong to the Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron 45 from Porcupine Plain. They're accompanied by Ed Tysowski, commanding officer; Mac Luke, administration officer; and Kay Green, supply officer.

I hope that these students find their tour this afternoon an

educational one, and I'm sure that they'll find the question period enjoyable. I look forward to meeting after question period with them in Room 204 of Mr. Hardy's office for refreshments and to answer any extra questions. And I ask the members of the Legislative Assembly to join with me in welcoming them this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to extend greetings to the air cadets and Mr. Ed Tysowski.

And also members will know that this week is Easter council week for teachers, councillors, throughout the province, at Easter council meeting. I would like to extend a welcome to a number of them who are here in the galleries this afternoon. I wish them well in their deliberations at their important Easter council meeting. Many of us were there last evening and had a chance to speak to many of them. I hope that they enjoy the question period and the debate that takes place in this Chamber, and wish them a safe trip home.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Young: — Mr. Speaker, having had lunch today with Ed, I'd like to add my welcome to that group. And particularly, Mr. Speaker, seated on the floor of the Assembly with us this afternoon, through you and to this House, I would like to introduce a long-time friend and constituent of mine, Arthur Whitter, who is a second- or third-year student at the University of Saskatchewan. Arthur . . . I have noticed him from time to time on television as a very articulate spokesman on behalf of handicapped needs, particularly handicapped needs at the university. I would ask that all members of the Assembly join with me in welcoming him here to this Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Appointment of International Marketing Consultants

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address my question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, the former minister of Finance. In February 1984, your department announced the appointment of what it called international marketing consultants in London, England, and Minot, North Dakota, and in Hong Kong. I'd ask the minister: can you tell us what kind of financial arrangements your department has with these marketing consultants? Are they paid as full-time employees of the Government of Saskatchewan; do they work on a personal services contract; or are they paid on a retainer?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I don't have available for you today the precise answer to that question. I will take notice and return to the Assembly with a detailed answer of each of those particular positions.

Mr. Koskie: — A supplemental then, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, are you aware that the London marketing

consultant, an Alexander Duffy, cost Saskatchewan taxpayers some \$49,000 last year? What I'm asking you is: can you explain why the taxpayers needed to shell out extra money when we are already paying more than a quarter of a million dollars a year for the agent-general's office in London? Is it a fact that the agent-general and his staff is incompetent? Why are we shelling out, over and above the quarter of a million dollars, an extra amount for this Mr. Duffy?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, again, I will take notice of the exact amount of that particular individual, Mr. Speaker, as to how much he's paid. The question as to why is that office needed? That office has four people in it versus 30 people in the Alberta office, versus several other people in various other offices. That office has been instrumental in trying to attract European investment into the province of Saskatchewan, and today, Mr. Speaker, with the announcement of the tremendous involvement of CdF Chimie in the project to build an ammonia plant in the city of Regina, I think the dollars spent in that London office are coming home and are being very well spent indeed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Marketing Consultant in Minot, North Dakota

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Economic Development. It has to do with the marketing consultant in Minot, North Dakota. The minister will be aware from the public accounts reports that Saskatchewan taxpayers paid out more than \$110,000 last year to this North Dakota businessman. Can the minister tell us what type of projects this marketing consultant undertook on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan for that kind of payment.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the . . . And again with regards to the details, I will check those and come back with them. The particular person in North Dakota does a lot of work with regard to Canadian manufacturers; particularly in the field of farm machinery manufacturers who look for markets, and in fact, have significant markets in the United States and particularly in the northern states where we have a transportation advantage that we could involve there. That particular individual spends a fair deal of his time dealing with that.

The second dimension of his time is to try to attract some of the neighbours to the South into Saskatchewan by way of tourism. As you have seen over the last two years, the number of tourists visiting Saskatchewan has increased each of the last two and three years by upwards of 20 per cent, and this particular individual is involved in that type activity and, I think, activity that quite frankly, the province of Saskatchewan, like most other provinces . . . The province of Manitoba is going far more afield, the province of Alberta far more afield, the province of Ontario . . . I think all provinces are coming to the realization that Canada must start taking a more international dimension than perhaps we have over the last 50 years.

I think that is a policy that is being supported, not only by our government, but by other governments of other

political parties across this country, and I think an area that we must continue to pursue to: (a) help assist in marketing our products; (b) help in attracting investments into our province; and (c) looking at tourism coming into our province. And I think we have a good story to tell both in Saskatchewan but also to the world.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the minister about his marketing consultant in Hong Kong, Mr. Kwok-Shing Loh. I understand from the *Public Accounts* that the Saskatchewan taxpayer has paid out just under \$124,000 to this person for what I take it is a part-time activity. Can the minister indicate what services this person would render that could not have been rendered by the 26 full-time staff of the Canadian High Commission in Hong Kong? Can he also advise whether this contract has been terminated now that we're spending nearly half a million dollars a year on the Saskatchewan government's new trade office in Hong Kong?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, Mr. Speaker, again if you look out to the world in Saskatchewan products perhaps the Pacific rim is the most attractive that we have seen. I believe the hon. member will be aware that when he was in government he had, I think, I believe, some people over there and stationed there for a period of time.

What we have to do, Mr. Speaker, as a province, is as follows. We rely greatly on the Pacific rim for trade of Saskatchewan products, whether it's our potash, whether it's our wheat, whether it's our variety of products, Mr. Speaker. The area that is being served, Mr. Speaker, by that office is China — the People's Republic of China — which is a very, very important market to our province; the country of Japan, the country of Korea, and all those other Pacific rim countries, and I think that we are being rather frugal in any expenditures that we are doing into the Pacific rim relative to any other country, any other province, from this country, and I think that those results are starting to show.

Travel Expenses

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Deputy Premier, and it has to do with the *Public Accounts* for 1984-1985. The documents in those *Public Accounts* show that the Premier and the cabinet spent more than \$457,000 last year driving their government cars and flying on government aircraft inside the province of Saskatchewan.

Now there isn't a clear entry, I might add, for out-of-province travel costs, which could easily double those figures for the cabinet. According to the new accounting and numbering in the *Public Accounts*, those figures are hard to find, strangely enough, this year — \$457,000 represents an increase of 59 per cent from 1981-1982.

I ask the Deputy Premier: when you are raising people's taxes and asking them to practise restraint, how do you defend a 59 per cent jump in travel expenses for the cabinet and the Premier?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Yes, I will take notice, Mr.

Speaker, and the reason that I'll take notice is, I don't know how the accounting of ministerial travel is done, and I kind of suspect they don't want to hear the answer anyway. But the question, if I were sitting over there — which is not likely to ever happen in your lifetime — but if I were sitting over there, and if I had the experience that that hon. member has as to the workings of government, I would ask the question to the Minister of Supply and Services, who is responsible for those figures.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I assumed that the Premier or the Deputy Premier might be able to refer the question or answer it. I have a supplementary.

After the by-election in Regina North East, the Premier made it very clear to everyone that he would put a stop to this kind of extravagant travel. Last December he said that. Now I'm asking the Deputy Premier whether he can get the Premier to table the new travel guide-lines which the Premier claimed to have put into place in December, and which the public and this legislature is still waiting for.

And later today, because I do not expect him to have them with him will he table documents to show how much money the government or the cabinet has spent on government car and travel in the fiscal year which ended 1985-1986. I simply say, if you want the people to believe you, Mr. Deputy Premier, you have to produce some documentation.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — As I recall, Mr. Speaker, following the by-election in Regina North East the Premier talked about listening and consulting and staying in touch with the people of Saskatchewan. And there were, I expect, as a result of that directive, Mr. Speaker, all kinds of minister driving into all kinds of communities in Saskatchewan to stay in touch with the people of Saskatchewan. And I fully expect that that's in part, at least, a part of the sensitivity that exists in members opposite, Mr. Speaker, because as a result of that lesson that was learned in Regina North East, and as a result of the additional communicating and consulting with the people of Saskatchewan, those people are very, very nervous about the possibility of the people . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Not in any way, shape, or form, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member from Quill Lakes will not be back, Mr. Speaker, and that will be a blessing for all of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It's difficult for the Deputy Premier to say anything about communication when yesterday I mentioned where the Premier had said, I can't go to every small town to defend our health policy. Obviously that's not communicating very well. He was talking about Estevan which I never thought was a small town.

My supplementary question to the Deputy Premier is — and he forgot in his remarks to answer it — will he undertake today to table the new travel guide-lines which the Premier promised that he would provide to his cabinet last December. Will he undertake to table those guide-lines?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I will undertake to

take notice of the question and let the Premier do his own tabling in his own time.

Purchases for Crop Insurance Office

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the acting Minister of Agriculture, the former minister of Agriculture, and the question is in regards to some purchases made in the office of the member for Arm River, the former minister in charge of crop insurance. In light of the fact that many people are saying that farmers are hard-pressed, and the crop insurance board doesn't have enough money, I wonder how it is that the member for Arm River is charging the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation anywhere from 100 to \$200 per month to supply his legislative office with jelly beans, mints and soup. I wonder, Mr. Acting Minister, who is approving this expenditure at a time when families are being told to pay more in taxes and that there isn't enough money to go around? Who's approving it?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. You've asked a question. Now I would ask you to give the member an opportunity to answer. Order.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, first, I, a long time ago learned not to take figures quoted by the member opposite as gospel, so I will firstly, Mr. Speaker, do my own research to see just how accurate they are.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the record of crop insurance and the record that this government has in defending the community of agriculture in this province, we will hold ours up to theirs any day of the week, any time of the day. And, Mr. Speaker, we are very proud — very proud — of the support that this government has given to agriculture in very tough times.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — A supplement to the minister, and I'll refer to either one of the former ministers of Agriculture, because I have here a grocery list from Canada Safeway Limited, dated the 28th day of January, 1986. This is a month or so after the member from Arm River was kicked out of cabinet. And on this grocery list, or this receipt from Canada Safeway, are humbugs, jelly beans, sour lemon drops, orange grape cocktail, and clamato juice.

Now I say to you, Mr. Minister: how is it that this bill that is totalled up to be \$137 — and this is being spent on a monthly basis for jelly beans and candy — how this is called for, that the taxpayers would be picking this bill up?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will give me the opportunity to do my own research — I'm just not prepared to take his numbers as gospel, number one, or even the suggestion that the event has taken place, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Engel: — I have a follow-up question on that same line, and it is to the Deputy Premier. At a time when the provincial government is urging everyone to practise restraint, one would expect you would do the same. With this in mind, can you tell why the Saskatchewan Crop

Insurance Corporation recently purchased four season tickets to the Saskatchewan Roughrider games, charged the \$580 bill to the corporation administrative fund? Now I understand you started this practice, Mr. Minister. Are these tickets for you? Are they for the former minister of Agriculture? Are they for Devine? Or are they for the member from Arm River? Who are these tickets for?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, the suggestion that I started this practice is absolute lunacy. I have never been to a Roughrider football game in my entire life, and I'm not about to start now, Mr. Speaker.

And further, Mr. Speaker, I can remember in 1982 sitting on Crown Management Board and going through, Crown by Crown by Crown, the number of Saskatchewan Roughrider tickets that were held by those birds, Mr. Speaker — those folks — when they were in government. And I think there's some justification in the Crowns supporting the Roughriders. Heaven knows, they need it. But there is some justification in that. But for that member, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that that practice was started by this government, is absolute lunacy.

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Speaker, crop insurance never bought tickets prior to 1982 — ever. And this year they bought tickets, and the question was: who's using them? You said you're not using, so that leaves three. Either my friend, the former minister in charge of crop insurance, is using them, or the Premier's using them, or the former minister of Agriculture. Who were those four tickets bought for — \$580 for season tickets, \$50 for active membership, \$40 for parking; total early payment, \$670 — when I am told to pay more premium for crop insurance?

Mr. Minister, if a Crown that's making money out of resources buys a tickets, that's another story. This Crown happens to be the farmers' agency and the farmers' money. Who's using the tickets?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I mean, this line of questioning is . . . I mean, it's an indication of the brilliance of the dude, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — That's right.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — That is exactly right. Because to take his same argument, under that government, when they were government, SGI, who lives on premiums paid for by the consumers of Saskatchewan, had Saskatchewan Roughrider tickets. Sask Power had Saskatchewan Roughrider tickets under that administration, Mr. Speaker. And the consumer of Saskatchewan, through the rates that they pay for their energy, I expect, paid for your football tickets. I'm not suggesting that . . .

An Hon. Member: — I never have.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I guess not, because I understand that you had to be in cabinet to be responsible for a Crown, and not even that leader would ever see you in cabinet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — But, Mr. Speaker, to get back to the question as to who used the tickets. I think it was 1983, in the fall of 1983, that my Premier removed that responsibility from me, and I just don't know who used the tickets.

Mr. Speaker, I will find out. If that's the most pressing issue of the day, if this is the most urgent and compelling thing that they can question this government on, Mr. Speaker, I will find out and, with all due haste, get that information for them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Lusney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question to the Minister of Health. With all the spending that's been going on here, with all the spending that this government has been doing, Mr. Minister, I have one here for you.

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

Mr. Lusney: — Mr. Minister, the public accounts for '84-85 show that your department paid \$37,500 to Tanka Research, or Tanka Resources Limited, the PC pollsters for your party. Can the minister . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. The member is not indeed asking a supplementary, but asking a new question. I'll take the member for Regina North West.

Mr. Sveinson: — Mr. Speaker, I think we've had it amply demonstrated that both sides of this House on this issue are corrupt. I would just like to ask the Deputy Premier what the policy is on football tickets with your government.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I'm sure that there's a stated policy that exists at Crown Management Board, as it related to the corporate citizenship of the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan. And again, Mr. Speaker, I don't have it at my fingertips. But again, if this is the urgent and compelling issue of the day, I will find out, Mr. Speaker, exactly what the policy is and bring it to the hon. member.

Government Use of Tanka Research

Mr. Lusney: — A question for the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, *Public Accounts 1984-85* show that your department paid some \$37,500 to Tanka resources, the PC's pollster. Mr. Minister, can you tell the people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, what polling your department had Tanka Resources do for them?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that I look at, and I would have to take notice of that and report back.

Mr. Lusney: — Well, Mr. Minister, are you telling the people that Saskatchewan that you, the Minister of Health, don't even know what polling your department has done, or if they have done any?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, that I'm responsible for \$1.2 billion, about one-third of the budget of Saskatchewan. And rather than mislead the member in any way, I told him I'll report back, and that's what I intend to do.

Mr. Lusney: — Supplementary. Mr. Minister, since you took notice of my other question, will you, at the same time then, table in this House the results of that poll, the questions that were asked, the responses, and the analysis of that poll, since the taxpayers of Saskatchewan paid for it?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I told him I'd look into this. I'm not making any announcement that I'm tabling anything at this point in time.

Mr. Lusney: — Mr. Speaker, a new question for the Minister of Social Services. Mr. Minister, in *Public Accounts* your department shows that they paid some \$12,000, again to Tanka Resources, the PC polling outfit that you have. Can you tell the taxpayers what polling was required for the Department of Social Services?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Mr. Speaker, I'll take notice of the question.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Creation of Fertilizer Plant in Regina

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure today in announcing to this House that the government today has taken steps to create a \$200 million fertilizer plant in the city of Regina.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Last evening, Mr. Speaker, a memorandum of intent was signed by Crown Management Board, by Federated Co-operatives Ltd., by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and by CdF Chimie International. This memorandum sets the stage for North America's first refinery-integrated fertilizer manufacturing plant.

The projected plant will produce 250,000 tonnes of anhydrous ammonia fertilizer per year. It is expected to create, initially, 100 new permanent jobs at the plant and an additional 100 jobs if the further products of fertilizer are being produced, as well as 600 indirect spin-off jobs, as well as over 1,000 jobs in the construction phase of this project.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is a giant leap forward for Saskatchewan agriculture as well as creating jobs. It is also going to be a tremendous shot in the arm for the heavy oil upgrade — the Co-op heavy oil upgrader that we helped to launch in the province of Saskatchewan. As well, it is going to be a tremendous boost for the sales of Saskatchewan-produced natural gas.

The memorandum of intent that we signed today, or last night, calls the four participants, representing the

government, co-operatives, private industry, and farmers, to form a joint venture and then to draw up detailed strategies for the project. When the strategy is in place later this year, the parties will make their final commitment to financing and the construction of this fertilizer plant. Developing that strategy will involve a series of studies on the plant size and cost, market and product mix, and technical and financial opportunities.

This particular project has been under way for about 15 months now. The Government of Saskatchewan and the company CdF Chimie have come to an understanding to proceed with this particular project and have recently involved and included the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, who showed extreme interest in it.

Mr. Speaker, the plant will involve state of the art technology. It will be involved with some of the new technology being developed throughout the world by CdF Chimie International.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the impact of this project will be to have a significant reduction on the price of fertilizer to the farmers of Saskatchewan. It will increase the demand for natural gas in the province of Saskatchewan by over 20 per cent, will create 200 jobs, will breathe a great deal of new revenue stream into the upgrader.

Mr. Speaker, this project is viable and will proceed for the following reason. A stand-alone ammonia plant would cost in the neighbourhood of \$400 million. By being able to tack it in and tie it in with the upgrader, that capital cost has been cut in half. And that capital cost being cut in half, what it will do, Mr. Speaker, is allow this to proceed, allow us to create those jobs, and allow us to deliver fertilizer to the people of Saskatchewan at a reduced cost.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments in respect to the minister's announcement. And as all of us will know, and the people of Saskatchewan will know, that there is announcement after announcement after announcement, and for four years we have seen no economic results. And here what they are making is an announcement of tying yet another plant to an upgrader which isn't even built.

We have promise after promise. And I want to say that the people of Saskatchewan don't believe this government. They have not been able to produce any results. And all that we have to date is press releases. And can you imagine that they have an upgrader which they had an official opening, and not one single step has been taken to start the construction — no construction has been taken. Now they're announcing that they're tying on to the non-existing upgrader yet another plant.

Well I'll tell you that the people of Saskatchewan don't believe you. You go down into Prince Albert and you make an announcement of Weyerhaeuser coming in to buy . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order please. A member can only deal with the items that are on the announcement . . . Order!

You're not allowed to refer to other announcements that have been made at previous times when answering a ministerial statement.

Mr. Koskie: — The point that I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is the credibility of that minister — getting up and making a statement of more economic development in this province when we find that the highest unemployment that this province has known — the highest number of people on welfare — and here we are saying that they're going to bring yet another development. It's all on paper.

Every individual announcement that they have made there is no concrete evidence of any substantial development. All of it is press releases. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan will not be fooled by the press releases in a desperate attempt to elect the PC party by fooling the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I wish to lay on the Table, pursuant to section 1 of section 30 of The Ombudsman Act, the report of the provincial Ombudsman.

ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS

At 2:44 p.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bills:

Bill. No. 01 — An Act respecting the Canadian Bible Society, Saskatchewan District.
 Bill No. 02 — An Act respecting Medical Services Incorporated
 Bill No. 3 — An Act to amend The Change of Name Act
 Bill No. 7 — An Act to amend The Statute Law
 Bill No. 9 — An Act to amend The Lloydminster Hospital Act, 1948
 Bill No. 10 — An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act
 Bill No. 11 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Environmental Management and Protection Act

His Honour retired from the Chamber at 2:46 p.m.

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.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think when we left off last night I was scolding the Government Whip for what I thought was inappropriate

behaviour. I see he's leaving. I don't intend to repeat those remarks and I suppose, Mr. Speaker, I'm not as angry as I was last night; however, I certainly don't recant the remarks. That is no way to run a legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by making some comments with respect to the local government commission. My colleagues and I have addressed many shortcomings of things that are in this budget. I'd like to begin by addressing something that is not in the budget. I was surprised and disappointed to find no reference in either the throne speech or the budget speech of the Devine's government Local Government Finance Commission. I'm sure all members will recall, and PC members will recall with some embarrassment, the great fanfare with which the Premier announced how the Local Government Finance Commission was going to solve so many problems.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that was two years ago, and those problems remain. But they don't remain unchanged, Mr. Speaker; those problems have become worse. They've become worse because of PC policy. For in this case their policy is clear, simple, and bad. They have starved local governments for financing — a 3 per cent increase in total revenue sharing for municipalities over the past two years, during which time there's been about a 10 per cent inflation. And they've eliminated property tax rebates — an enormous shift to local government, an enormous tax shift onto local property taxpayers. And let there be no mistake, that Devine tax shift has been a very real tax increase for local property taxpayers.

But when we turn to the budget speech for last week, do we see any reference at all to the Local Government Finance Commission? No. This is another classic example of this PC government's record — bad planning, bad management, bad policy; hopes raised, and just as quickly, hopes dashed; promises made and promises broken.

Mr. Speaker, the central issue in this campaign has been one which members opposite have approached, but in a negative fashion. Mr. Speaker, the central issue . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the member from Saskatoon South may take some note of this issue. It deals with unemployment, something you may face in the very immediate future.

The central issue in the next election campaign, Mr. Speaker, will be a simple one: how best can we get Saskatchewan working again. Who best can get Saskatchewan working again, is perhaps putting the question more precisely from the point of view of electors. And by the simple standard, that simple test, the PC budget has failed, and the Devine PC government has failed over the last four years. For it fundamentally fails to address basic problems: the need to create new jobs in the small-business activity throughout all Saskatchewan in every community in our province; the need to provide decent, affordable housing for all Saskatchewan people; the need to provide security for Saskatchewan families — security so families can plan, can build, can invest in the enormous potential for Saskatchewan.

Because of the Devine government's policy failures, we

have seen over the past two years new housing starts at their lowest level in a dozen years; small businesses that are able, energetic, but whose receipts and income have dropped because of poor management of our economy by the PC government; young families in need of housing, unable to get into the housing market because of unemployment and insecurity; families under stress because they're unable to plan and therefore unable to help invest in and build the growth of Saskatchewan.

That is why, throughout my constituency and every community in Saskatchewan, people are excited about the New Democrats' bold and positive housing program for the future — a positive and comprehensive housing program that will help get Saskatchewan working again; jobs for Saskatchewan people in every community; contracts and activities for Saskatchewan small business in every community; decent, affordable housing for Saskatchewan families in every community; and mortgage rate security for Saskatchewan families in every community. A truly great Saskatchewan megaproject, not just one big out-of-the-province corporation, but for all Saskatchewan communities, for all Saskatchewan businesses.

For the people of Saskatchewan do not believe that we should be content with 42,000 people unemployed and 60,000 dependent on welfare. Nor are we content with that, nor do we believe that that's at all socially acceptable. We pledge ourselves to establish the right of every person to a job, who is able to work.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Nor do Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan small businesses believe we should be content with only 5,300 new housing starts per year, the lowest level in many, many years. They know that working together, we can get Saskatchewan working again, and that the New Democrats' positive housing program will do just that. These are our commitments.

For first-time home buyers of new homes, a New Democratic government will provide direct financial assistance of \$7,000. This program will be in place for a minimum of three years to provide some stability in the housing market and to avoid the boom and bust impact of the Devine government's short-term crisis management.

For those living in older homes in need of major repair and rehabilitation, New Democratic government will provide direct home rehab assistance of up to \$7,000. This would include major projects to improve energy conservation.

In order to provide interest rate security for Saskatchewan families with new and existing mortgages, a New Democratic government will provide a family home protection plan guaranteeing 7 per cent home mortgages for seven years on the first \$70,000 of the mortgage. For low-income families and individuals, as well as senior citizens, a New Democratic government would make a major commitment to the construction of social housing.

New Democrats are not satisfied with the PC level of only 5,300 new housing starts per year. We have therefore set

a target of 8,000 new starts a year, and a minimum of a further 2,000 major rehabilitation projects per year. The impact will be enormous: 3,600 new jobs per year, or 18,000 jobs over five years, without counting the indirect spin-off effects in the provision of appliances, fencing, landscaping, and furnishings; 250 million in increased economic activity per year, or 1.3 billion over the next five years. That's an incremental 1.3 billion in economic activity throughout many sectors in the economy and throughout every community in Saskatchewan — a New Democratic housing program that will work and that will go a long way toward helping getting Saskatchewan working again.

Over the past 10 days there have been two kinds of responses, Mr. Speaker, to this New Democratic housing program. The first has been the overwhelming, positive, and enthusiastic response from the public. Our phones have been literally rung off the wall, taxing the energy and patience of our staff with their encouraging and positive and excited calls. They know that this is a positive housing program that will work. They know it will help get Saskatchewan working again, and they want it.

The second response has been the sour grapes criticism from PC members opposite. PC members try to say that since they are paying \$100 million a year in welfare payments to fully employable people, they can't afford a positive housing program that will cost a great deal less than that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, members opposite are wrong. The people of Saskatchewan and New Democrats know it's far better, far more production, to put people to work doing real jobs than to pay out welfare. And so I say this to members opposite: Saskatchewan can't afford the PC policy of welfare instead of jobs. We can't afford to continue spending 100 million on welfare payments to fully employable people when they want to work, there's work to be done, and when we can spend less to put them to work.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore invite PC members opposite to explain to the contractors and the small businesses in their constituency; explain to the unemployed; explain to the young families getting into the housing market; and explain to seniors and others in older homes your lack of faith and courage. Explain why it's the PC policy to pay people welfare who want to work, and why it's the PC policy of members opposite to oppose a positive housing program that will get Saskatchewan working again.

(1500)

In a few short weeks, Mr. Speaker, the voters of Saskatchewan will be making a critical choice. They will be asking if Saskatchewan can afford four more years of a Devine government. They will be asking who can best govern Saskatchewan for a better, brighter future for all Saskatchewan people. They will be asking themselves who can best get Saskatchewan working again. The New Democrats are looking forward to that campaign, Mr. Speaker, genuinely look forward to the explanations, or lack of them, from members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a comment, if I might, about

the form in which the *Public Accounts* takes this year.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government which came into office four years ago on a promise of open government. Since that time, their behaviour has suggested that they don't trust the public. They also don't apparently have any confidence in their own ability to sell their ideas and their programs to the public, because their reference throughout those four years, Mr. Speaker, have been a denial of open government and an attempt to keep as much information from the opposition and from the public, consequently.

Their behaviour, Mr. Speaker, with respect to an abnormal number of megaprojects — one can think of the Rafferty dam; one can think of the Weyerhaeuser project in Prince Albert; one can think of the ammonia plant today, and a number of other projects in which no details of financing was provided. Mr. Speaker, that is not heretofore the way these matters were handled.

When the government of Ross Thatcher, some 17 years ago, set up the pulp-mill which is now the subject of the Weyerhaeuser sale, all of the financing documents, all of the documents with respect to the right to cut in new woods, with respect to the royalties to be paid, with respect to stumpage fees — all those, Mr. Speaker, were laid on the legislative Table when the announcement was made. Whether or not we agreed with Premier Thatcher, he at least had the courage to defend what he was doing and was prepared to do so.

This government is too cowardly to defend what they're doing. They provide us with no details and no facts, and I say, Mr. Speaker, what this government is afraid of is not the opposition, what this government is afraid of is the public. That's why, Mr. Speaker, they're not giving the opposition, and thus the public, any details of these agreements, and that's why, Mr. Speaker, the public to date have been frustrated with respect to an election. The question I get asked most often is: when's the next election, the electorate say, as they're filing their teeth.

Well I say, Mr. Speaker, the public are being frustrated with respect to the details of these contracts for the same reason they're being frustrated with respect to the date of an election, because this government is afraid of the public, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I want to complain while I am on my feet about the form in which the *Public Accounts* take. There is more than one instance, Mr. Speaker, of the form being changed so that there will be less information available. And the obvious example which has been used is with respect to ministers' travel. The figures which were heretofore available are no longer available with respect to ministers' travel. It cannot be because there's no interest in it. I think I detected, Mr. Speaker, some small trickling of interest when they heard how much the former minister of Highways had spent on travel. I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that we don't get that information because they think there's no interest in it, or because they think it's not relevant; I think, Mr.

Speaker, this government is afraid of the public. They're not going to give them the information, and they're not tabling that in the *Public Accounts*.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to the deficit if I might. Mr. Speaker, the management of this province's affairs over the last four years is just simply frightening. That is in no way an exaggeration. It is just simply frightening.

Mr. Speaker, there is no huge difference between managing the affairs of a family or a business or a province. The same principles apply. If you run up huge debts and you don't manage your affairs, you don't pay your bills on time, eventually you impoverish yourself. A family which does not manage its finances, and which winds up with huge debts that they're repaying, is a family that lowers its whole standard of living — it become impoverished.

Mr. Speaker, the public debt in Saskatchewan is alarming.

An Hon. Member: — Look at Manitoba. They have the highest per capita debt in Canada. Under the NDP, it's gone up.

Mr. Shillington: — The member from North West, who was part of the Conservative caucus for some two budgets — and I thought I saw him voting in favour of at least two of those deficits of which he now displays with such righteous fever — I suggest to the member from Regina North West that in addition to having a forked tongue he has also mistaken the facts.

I will venture to say that when we get the *Public Accounts* for the year ending March 31, 1986, our per capita debt will be higher than Manitoba's. I think that is a fair assumption. Why? Because Manitoba's, although it may be high, is honestly stated. I don't know anyone outside the Conservative caucus who honestly believes that you birds have accurately stated your indebtedness. And why should we begin to believe in you now? You have yet to accurately state what this government's debt is going to be.

You stated during the election that you could accomplish all manner of things — the wildest, the most irresponsible promises, without any provincial debt, and of course you are astonished when you get into office that money doesn't grow on trees; that when you make lavish promises, there must be lavish taxes to pay for it.

In the first budget, Mr. Speaker, and in the second budget, for which the member from Regina North West voted in favour, there were alarmingly large deficits estimated, and inevitably when the *Public Accounts* came in, the actual deficit was vastly in excess of what had been predicted. I suggest to all members opposite that when the *Public Accounts* for the year ending March 31, 1986, are published, you will find that our per capita debt is the highest in Canada, west of the Maritimes.

Mr. Speaker, as I say, the management of this province's affairs is truly alarming.

It's worth looking at some of these figures in the *Public*

Accounts which were tabled. I refer members to the table on page 3, Province of Saskatchewan Combined Funds. I see in 1985, for the first year in this province's affairs since probably sometime in the '50s, Saskatchewan no longer . . . this province no longer has a net equity; it now has a net debt. And that is the first time in probably around 30 years that has been the case.

Mr. Speaker, in 1984 this province had a net equity of 345 million. And that's down from . . . That is a small fraction of what it was, Mr. Speaker, when the former administration left office. That is a fraction of what it was. But in 1984 the net equity was \$345 million. In 1985 that became a net debt of \$65 million.

Mr. Speaker, I tried to figure out what the province's net debt would be after the series of announcements which have been made with respect to Rafferty, Weyerhaeuser, Gainers, and away and on and on you go. I tried to figure out what the province's net debt position would be. I don't what it will be, Mr. Speaker, but it will be many hundreds of millions of dollars, if it is not over a billion dollars.

Twice in the last two years, Mr. Speaker, this province's credit rating has been lowered by those who rate . . . who perform such services in New York. I fear, Mr. Speaker, that for the third time in three years this province is going to find its credit rating lowered again this year. And the public of Saskatchewan have to ask themselves how much longer they can afford that kind of management.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a gradual erosion of this province's strength. This is a sudden collapse. It has happened very rapidly. I would venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that the erosion of this province's equity into debt has occurred more quickly in this province than at any time in Canadian history. I defy any members to think of a four-year period in which the financial strength of a province eroded as quickly as it did in this province over the last four years.

We have gone from having one of the strongest economies and one of the best-managed governments in Canada to one of the worst-managed — positively the worst-managed — in four short years.

Mr. Speaker, our family comprises a family of four. The debt which our family has accumulated in the last four years is \$8,000. That's \$8,000. Well, there are four people. There are four people. Our two children, who are not old enough to contemplate what a thousand is, never mind to understand what public debt means to them, our two children have \$2,000 each. That kind of management, Mr. Speaker, is truly alarming.

Mr. Speaker, this hasn't occurred because the province has been shaving its expenditures. This province has gone on spending at a higher rate, and its increases in its spending have consistently, in each budget, been grater than the rate of inflation. That has occurred again this year. All the talk about restraint is just that — just talk. It's the same as the talk about the municipal finance commission, same as the talk about the housing program, same as it is in so many areas. It's just empty talk.

This year, Mr. Speaker, total provincial taxes go up by about 7 per cent. The receipt from government enterprises and elsewhere has gone up by 19 per cent. Total revenue from other sources is up 12 per cent. The total revenue is up 6 per cent. Mr. Speaker, total revenue this year is up 6 per cent. That is about 50 per cent more than the rate of inflation.

With respect to expenditures, one item that ought to be of interest to members opposite, Mr. Speaker, is the interest paid on debt. In 1984, we paid \$56 million as interest on our debt. That figure doubled — Mr. Speaker, in 1985, the year ending March 31, 1985, we paid 102 million. It is estimated that in the year ending March 31st, 1987, we will pay 200 million.

Mr. Speaker, the figure doubled in 1984, doubled in 1985, and will double again before the next fiscal year is completed. That, Mr. Speaker, is what I mean by the impoverishment of the Saskatchewan public.

I want to take a moment to go through some of the expenditures. But I say to members opposite and to you, Mr. Speaker, when you're spending \$200 million on interest, and there's a whole lot of places you aren't spending money — and I'm going to go through some of those before I sit down — this province faces some serious problems with public services. Some public services are near the point of collapse. When you ask why they're near the point of collapse when revenues are up 6 per cent and expenditures are up 7 per cent, why essential public services cannot be maintained, Mr. Speaker, one of the main causes is the growth in the payments on interest.

(1515)

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a moment as well dealing with the estimates. I want to deal with some of the departments whose services that they are delivering are falling into serious disrepair.

Mr. Speaker, the grants to Saskatchewan universities in Advanced Education. The amount of the grants are going up by 3 per cent. That is just simply not enough. That is going to result in: (a) a further deterioration in the universities; and (b) probably an increase in tuition at the same time. We're probably going to get both.

Mr. Speaker, I was of school-going age during the '60s. I remember our generation was angry and idealistic. And I remember watching fellows students protest, parade, and occupy the dean's office. I say, Mr. Speaker, that we had little right to complain by comparison to young people now. If young people now aren't angry about the way they're being treated, then they ought to be. Whether or not one agrees with Senator Hébert's protest, with his protest outside the Senate Chamber, there are a great many people who sympathize with his expression of concern about what is happening to young people. In so many ways, in so many ways, Mr. Speaker, we are short-changing the younger generation. And one of the most important ways we're short-changing the younger generation comes on the opening pages of the *Estimates* with respect to education.

Education, the universities . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well if the member from Saskatoon South doesn't believe that the universities have deteriorated, I invite him to go out to the university campus and say that. The university campuses, both of them, have spent some time trying to get Conservative members out of their caucus to talk about funding, and no member opposite has had the nerve to go.

If you think university funding is right down to the ground, then I invite any members opposite to go to the students and tell them that, because I'll tell you it won't be a pleasant experience when you try it.

The universities, Mr. Speaker, have deteriorated and have deteriorated sharply. I say also, Mr. Speaker, that so have other educational institutes, although not quite as dramatically. Even the technical institutes — Kelsey in Saskatoon, STI in Moose Jaw — even those institutions which this government boasts about what it has done, even those institutions, Mr. Speaker, are overcrowded. Students cannot get into courses that they're interested in. Mr. Speaker, the facilities — the lab facilities, the libraries — are not adequate to deal with the numbers they have.

I say to member opposite, if you think that you've done a good job in the technical institutes and universities, then I invite you to accept one of those invitations which have never been taken up by members opposite, and go to the campuses and tell them what a grand job you're doing. And I'll tell you, it will be a while before you'll go back a second time. You can't tell those people — you cannot tell the students that you've done a good job with education any more than you have the courage to tell the nurses that you've done a good job in health.

I notice how courageous members opposite are about going to the meetings called by SUN (Saskatchewan Unions of Nurses) and telling them what a great job they're doing in health. Why? Because it doesn't wash with those people who can cite you chapter and verse as to what you're doing wrong.

Well, you're making the very same mistakes with respect to education. And I say to members opposite that your most serious failing has to do with the way that you have treated young people, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want as well to mention the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I know, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite believe that this department is no longer faddish. I say to members opposite that this department serves a very useful purpose in helping, often very ordinary people sort out what may appear in the scheme of things to be small problems. This is a department which . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I'll just be delighted to hear the member from Maple Creek tell us why she thinks she can get along on almost 4 per cent less in the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. This department may not be faddish. In the estimate of members opposite it may not rate with announcing a \$250 million give-away in Prince Albert. But I'll tell you, to a lot of Saskatchewan people this department is important.

People buy a car; they have a problem with it. It's this

department that sorts out problems which ordinary people have. This department, which complains of overwork every time I contact this department and I say you are late in dealing with the problem of my constituent X — the response I get: well, you know we're terribly understaffed and we've got too much to do; you just have to understand, Mr. Shillington. And I say I do understand why the staff of your department cannot work miracles, but I don't understand why members opposite would short-change this department which serves the ordinary person.

Mr. Speaker, the single most important and unique feature of the Saskatchewan economy is the role played by co-operatives — apart from la Caisse Populaire in Quebec — this province has the vast majority of co-operatives in Canada. The government of Tommy Douglas about whom members think so much, the government of Tommy Douglas set up a department to service this large and unique Saskatchewan industry — this large and unique Saskatchewan phenomenon. Spending in the department of co-ops is down 3 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, very little was said about employment in the budget, and very little was said about the throne speech. There were the usual noises. I'm not going to dignify the language by describing . . . they've heard enough. There was the usual noises made with respect to the creation of jobs. The truth of matter, Mr. Speaker, is that this province's job creation effort is woefully inadequate.

Members opposite can say whatever they like about creating jobs. I simply say to them: you're not believed. The public of Saskatchewan don't believe you've done a good job. And indeed they're right because as fast as you've been creating jobs, you've been destroying them. Most of the jobs this government has created have been short-term jobs lasting 20 or 22 weeks with really one function in mind: (a) to boost the statistics and, (b) to decrease the number of people on welfare. This province's job creation efforts have not been intended to get people working. They have been designed with the purpose of getting people off welfare, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, spending in the Employment Development Agency in a year when this province undoubtedly faces the most difficult economic prospects that it has in a very long period of time, in a year when we are bound to have very serious pressure in the job market, spending in the Employment Development Agency is down by 20 per cent. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask members opposite whether or not you think that is in accordance with public expectations?

And once again, Mr. Speaker, we are short-changing young people. It's primarily young people who are the victims of this government's insensitivity and this government's lack of compassion. Young people whom I run into do not believe the world owes them a living. That was a belief, I suppose, of people of my generation. Young people no longer believe such nonsense. But most young people do believe that the world owes them a chance to develop a career. And for very many young people, Mr. Speaker, that's being denied.

Mr. Speaker, by way of introducing myself to young people, for years and years and years, after introducing myself as an elected member, I then used to ask people: what do you do? I found that almost everybody can talk about themselves, and thus they can carry on a conversation about what they do. Mr. Speaker, that device, which is by no means exclusive to myself and is by no means new, that simple trick can no longer be used in talking with young people. You don't dare ask young people: what do you do? Because so many of them, after a silence I'm sure is more painful to me than it is to them — so many of them say, well I'm between jobs. Between jobs indeed! Some of them are years between jobs, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, this government has failed the young people of this province. They are decreasing their efforts to provide work. They're allowing universities to deteriorate so rapidly that it's visible. You can visibly see them deteriorating. And they're allowing technical schools as well to deteriorate.

Mr. Speaker, among the groups which I think felt the most trepidation when this government was elected, was native people. As I looked over the electoral map after the election, if this government felt like being crass, it wasn't obvious who would be neglected and who were the victims, because with eight exceptions, they represented the entire province. But one exception to that was the North — if they had won those seats in the North — and presumably had little expect to by way of electoral support.

Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that the worst fears of the people in northern Saskatchewan and the worst fears of native people have been realized. My colleague, whom I genuinely regret will not be with us in the next legislature, my seat-mate from Cumberland describes this much more eloquently and with much more feeling than I do.

Mr. Speaker, it is noteworthy that again this government's spending on Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat is down by 16 per cent. This, Mr. Speaker, is the group of people who suffer the highest rate of unemployment; the highest rate of alcoholism, marital breakdown; these people who have what is by any measurement the most severe problems in our society — spending on the Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat is down by 16 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, there are other results of spending \$200 million on interest. One of them is the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman has had some comments. I don't know whether the Minister of Economic Development and Trade is going to describe this as a vicious comment. The last time that the Ombudsman complained that his staff was being cut, he was described as vicious by the member from Kindersley. I don't know if he'll adopt the same tack again. I expect at this time he'll think better of it and probably make some new mistakes. The Ombudsman's office, Mr. Speaker, the funding is down by 3 per cent, and that represents one less staff person.

Mr. Speaker, in an era when the economic stresses are increasing, in an era when the public are demanding more of government as they seek to deal with a more desperate situation, the work-load in the office of the

Ombudsman has increased quite dramatically, as people seek to struggle with a situation that they don't understand, and with a government which doesn't seem to be interested in working with them, and doesn't seem to be interested in solving them. The work-load of the Ombudsman's office has increased dramatically, and they've been cut one staff.

The same is true of the Provincial Auditor's report. I don't want to get into the Provincial Auditor's report. All I can say is, when I read it I didn't know whether to laugh or cry — laugh because of the comments that he made about this government's handling of its financial affairs. And we'll spend . . . Depending on what happens over the weekend, we'll get into that fairly shortly. But I say to members opposite that the report of the Provincial Auditor is a damning indictment of this government's inability to manage its affairs, and if any member doubts that, spend the weekend reading that report. I have never read anything like it. Government is forever losing trifles — they're out by 25 million, they're out by 3 million. There doesn't seem to be anyone who can add up a column of figures and get within 3 million bucks of the right amount. And it happens over and over again. The office of the Provincial Auditor, whose work-load has increased quite dramatically, has once again, Mr. Speaker, had his staff cut at a time when he needs greater staff, rather than less.

(1530)

The area, Mr. Speaker, that I find the most painful is the Department of Social Services. I find the work of this department to be the most appalling in human terms. This isn't an area, Mr. Speaker, where the funding has been cut. Indeed the funding has increased very dramatically. They're spending another \$10 million, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why I find the work of this department so appalling is the human tragedy that it's creating. I remember, Mr. Speaker, debating the so-called welfare reform in May of 1984, if my memory serves me correct. I remember debating it as an academic question. They were cutting the rates to unemployed employables by 40 per cent. We said it wouldn't work; they said it would.

Later, when the session adjourned and I got back to my constituency, I began to understand what that meant in human terms. What it meant was hunger. I don't know that any statistic measures that except the statistics of the food bank who have done yeoman service in standing between a great number of Saskatchewan families and utter disaster. The fact that . . . and I applaud those people involved in the food bank.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that they are doing their level best, but the fact that we have food banks in this country is a testimony to the callousness, the insensitivity, of Conservative governments in this land and how little Conservative governments understand the complexity of life in the latter part of the 20th century. I say to members opposite, we are not living in the 19th century. And the 17th century, as much as you want to bring it back, is gone for ever. We live in the latter part of the 20th century.

We live in a complex society. To promote simplistic solutions from the halls of a university as an academic proposition is every man's right. If someone wants to be a crank in this country, it's your right to be a crank, if you want. But to hold office and promote these crankish theories about making people work for welfare, to do that from elected office creates a disaster. Members opposite have created a disaster.

What it has meant, Mr. Speaker, is within nine months of welfare reform, a doubling of property crimes in Saskatchewan. That was not an accident. That occurred because we have people in this province who are desperate. I remember, Mr. Speaker, an old police sergeant telling me, when a community in which I lived was going to close down their welfare and give no welfare to anybody, I remember an old policeman urging me to go to the town council and talk them out of it. His rationale was very simple. I'm the sergeant in town and, he said, I'll tell you, a dangerous man's a hungry man, and I don't want dangerous people in this community.

Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned about the inability of the staff in the Department of Social Services to deal with their workload. We have complaints, Mr. Speaker, that the social workers are callous. They don't care, complaints that social workers are telling people to go and commit property crimes, engage in prostitution. I tell you, those comments are all absolute nonsense — all unadulterated nonsense. But the truth is that the social workers do not have the time to deal with the flood of applications. They don't have time to adequately deal with the human tragedy which comes before them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to . . . And in case members opposite think this is a member who happens to represent a lot of social welfare recipients ranting, let me quote from an authority that members might find opposite. I'm beginning to understand why the Ombudsman had his staff cut. I want to quote from Ombudsman's Report which was tabled today. It is item number six on page 50, and the heading says it all, Mr. Speaker.

Continued Callousness in the Social Assistance System.

I'm going to read this, Mr. Speaker, because it deserves to be read into the record.

In my 1983 annual report I devoted several pages to problems in the social assistance field. Among other things, I expressed concern about the callous treatment of some social assistance persons and including actual cases involving youths, illiterate persons and those suffering from physical and mental disabilities to emphasize the point.

My annual report for 1984 also touched on the same subject and did so in the following terms: While I was unable (in 1984) to devote as many of our scarce resources to the investigation of this particular issue as I might have wished, we did investigate sufficient cases to enable me to conclude that if the situation has improved it has

only improved in a marginal way. While it is difficult to segregate the effects of increased client pressure on the department, the changes in the social assistance system, (welfare reform) and staff attitudes, it is certainly my impression that the kind of problems in the social assistance system that I identified last year are still with us. For whatever reasons we have still regularly encountering an abundance of the "Catch-22" situations and a preoccupation with financial requirements rather than with providing the guidance and counselling that might permit some social assistance persons to limit or eliminate their dependence on the "welfare system".

While this year's cases were of a less dramatic variety in that they did not involve the ill, the aged, the problems of illiterates, I believe they still illustrate the concerns I expressed last year regarding the department's attitudes and policies towards persons on social assistance. I am more convinced than ever that stress is the source of the problem and that additional resources rather than training and public relations, is the answer.

Unfortunately, there is a need to emphasize this point again this year. The following case summary is perhaps as good as any to illustrate our ongoing concern.

The Ombudsman chose this as an illustration of what's happening with this department, Mr. Speaker. I would expect that members opposite, particular those that profess Christian faith, and indeed some that don't profess Christian faith, would take this to heart. The case is numbered 84-23000-40-243.

In December of 1984 two sisters from northern Saskatchewan contacted my office regarding the treatment by the Department of Social Services in Saskatoon.

The sisters are mothers of two severely handicapped children and two other children, all four years of age. They moved to Saskatoon so that their children could get the treatment they needed from the Children's Rehabilitation Centre at the University Hospital.

The complaint was that Social Services was delaying in provision of adequate assistance, and would not furnish them with a furniture allowance to buy the furniture they need for an unfurnished suite they had located. (This has a familiar ring to it).

There had been no contact between the department and the Indian Affairs worker in the north, nor had there been any contact between Social Services and Children's Rehabilitation Centre until the latter became aware of the problems the girls were having in obtaining financial assistance, and finding a suitable place to live. This was almost two months after they came from the north to bring their children to the Centre.

The girls were not given adequate assistance (I know members don't particularly like to listen to this), the girls were not given adequate assistance until there was an intervention by the Metis Society, the Children's Rehabilitation Centre and my office. It was not until these agencies intervened . . .

To check these . . . It was not until after the Children's Aid Society intervened that this problem was resolved.

I found the complaint to be substantiated, but for reasons that escape me yet, the department has not accepted this conclusion and continue to insist that their actions were fair and reasonable and that no undue hardship was caused by its actions and omissions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some members who canvassed in Regina North West will have their own horror stories. I recall meeting individuals . . . North East. I recall meeting individuals in the North East by-election who had no furniture — families, parent and children — with no way of sitting down at the table. There was no furniture. The one family in particular ate in shifts. Two ate and then the next two ate, because there were only two chairs and there was no way of getting them.

Well, I see the incredulous look on the face of the Deputy Speaker. I say, if you think there's a simple solution, other than going and getting the furniture for them, which is what we did — we simply went and got some furniture for them and gave it to them — if you think there's another solution to that, I invite you to go out there and tell them. And I'll give you the address in private. I'll give you the address in private, and you can go out and see them and you can explain to him how he gets his furniture . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, you can use my car. You can use my car.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to read the next section because it goes directly to what I and members opposite have been saying about welfare reform over the last nearly two years — nearly two years since it was introduced. This, again, is from the Ombudsman's Report. He is an officer of this Assembly. This is not one of these non-government organizations, NGOs, which you people believe are universally against you. This was an officer of this legislature describing a situation that he has dealt with, to the point where I'm sure it's taxing his patience.

Welfare reform — is it working?

The answer to this question very much depends upon the test that one applies and an understanding of the "real" goals of the program. In our case, the test that we would apply may well not be that of the department of the minister because we expect the program to serve the clients fairly and to not, unnecessarily, add to their difficulties. When viewed from this perspective, the welfare reform program certainly does not pass the test.

We are seeing a lot of "hurt" in the welfare reform program and this is being reflected in both our statistics and our investigations. For example, the first twenty months since the changes were introduced have seen a dramatic increase in social assistance complaints to my office. The increase is in the order of 77 per cent. In 1985, social assistance complaints totalled 317, or approximately one-fifth of all our complaints against the provincial government. This class of complaint totalled only 107 in 1982, 179 in 1983. By way of comparison, our overall increase in all complaints against the government for the same period was in the order of 39 per cent.

My, there indeed is a bright achievement: complaints have only increased by 39 per cent overall.

While many of our investigations are not yet concluded, there are also some early indications of serious problems. This is particularly true in the case of long-term recipients who have been categorized for the first time, as being "employable" or "partially employable". An example in point involves a divorced woman in her fifties in a rural area who is expected to cease her assistance to her ailing parents and to use the "family" car to travel many miles to seek out employment opportunities. This woman had virtually *no* work experience before she became caught up in "welfare reform".

Yet this woman described in this fashion is deemed employable.

(1545)

We have also seen difficulties in the working conditions of persons who have been "required" to take employment with employers approved by the department. We have seen examples of employees who have had to work 10 hours a day seven days a week for 40 hours pay per week and other examples where employers have been unwilling to pay overtime of any kind for six or seven days of work per week, i.e. — only one day off every two or three weeks.

Then the following — and it's the last paragraph I'll read — the following is in italics:

For the above reasons, I sincerely hope that there will be a reassessment of the program, or at least of its hard edges, by an independent and qualified individual or by a group such as the School of Social Work. As the government's . . .

An Hon. Member: — How long have you had that document?

Mr. Shillington: — About 10 minutes.

An Hon. Member: — Is somebody sneaking on the floor?

Mr. Shillington: — No, the page snuck me one. The page is very sneaky. He walks around in black clothing and

occasionally slips things onto my desk, one of which was the report of the Ombudsman.

An Hon. Member: — My you're a fast reader, Ned.

Mr. Shillington: — Yes, I'll tell you, that's virtually true. You could pick up this Ombudsman report, start reading virtually anywhere, and find a damning indictment of this government. But, Mr. Speaker, the most appalling is the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the following is in italics. It's worth listening to:

For the above reasons, I sincerely hope that there will be a reassessment of the program, or at least of its hard edges, by an independent and qualified individual or a group such as the School of Social Work. As the government's welfare reform program will soon be two years old, this would be a logical time for a review to take place.

Mr. Speaker, members opposite will no doubt pooh-pooh these. I say to members opposite, how many people are vicious, unfair . . . being vicious and unfair? I remember the member from Kindersley describe some women who came here peacefully asking for a change in government policy, were described as a bunch of NDP women. And some of them were annoyed. One of them who had been a Liberal candidate was a bit annoyed about the remark.

The next group who, according the member from Kindersley were vicious, was the entire public service who submitted a report on social services, and it was described as a vicious report. Now we have an officer of the legislature saying in the boldest of terms that this program is every bit as bad as the clients of the Department of Social Services have said it is. What happens? Well I suppose the member from Kindersley and other members will no doubt describe this as a vicious report.

Mr. Speaker, on page 60 of this report . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I am. I commend to the member from Saskatoon South — although your days of glory never began . . . Eastview. I'm sorry. Your days of glory never began, I say to the member from Saskatoon Eastview, you want to try some reading. Try some of the . . . Try a couple of reports of the officers of this Assembly if you want to find some vicious anti-government propaganda. Try reading the comments of the Provincial Auditor. It is steeped in the language of an auditor and doesn't read — doesn't quite read . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well we'll wait until we get the . . .

Mr. Member, if you want to read some really vicious attacks, try the officers of this Assembly; try the Provincial Auditor who speaks in accounting language; try the Ombudsman, who to his credit can put his thoughts in the language which is easier for ordinary people to understand.

Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, it won't help you to look at the rules. There's nothing improper about me reading the reports tabled in this Assembly. You can put the book away. There is nothing I am doing which is out

of order, and if you attempt to call me out of order, the Speaker is going to be back here to rule on it. And I say that to Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that on . . . Mr. Speaker, on page 60, the Ombudsman rates the quality of service to the public provided by the department, governments, and agencies. In every single case the rating is either static or down. There are some which are static, but the most of them are down.

I say, Mr. Speaker, I can understand why members opposite are a bit nervous about going to the public. I can understand that, Mr. Speaker, because a little bit of knowledge, I might say, is a dangerous thing as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can understand why members opposite are so nervous about calling an election.

An Hon. Member: — Table it.

Mr. Shillington: — Table it? It's already been tabled. If the member from Eastview had any interest in his work as a member for the Assembly, he might be running again. And if he had any interest in the affairs of this Assembly, he might well be prepared to read what the officers of this Assembly say about the conduct of this government's affairs, because what those two officers say, who are officers of the Assembly . . . To protect their integrity, I'll tell you, it's a good thing they're not hired by the Public Service Commission or they'd be gone.

An Hon. Member: — They're radicals.

Mr. Shillington: — Crazy and radicals. Both of them, Mr. Speaker, have a damning indictment of this government's performance.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with two other parts of the estimates of Social Services. Mr. Speaker, talk about believing in the Easter bunny; there's a whole new religion growing up of people who believe in the Easter bunny.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan assistance plan, the figures in the Saskatchewan assistance plan, Mr. Speaker, they have lowered the amount payable under the Saskatchewan assistance plan. If you can believe that, you can believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — What is it?

Mr. Shillington: — Well it is ludicrous — absolutely ludicrous, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the estimated figures for 1985-86 is 192 million.

I notice the member for Rosemont didn't spend a large amount of time on his comments on the throne speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker — I recall the member from Rosemont did not spend much time talking about the work of his department. You spent a great deal of time talking about what a bunch of devils the NDP were. You talked about the crazies; you talked about the radicals; you talked about the uranium mines. You talked about every conceivable sin under the sun. I swore he was going

to use the phrase, Tucker or Tyranny. It's the same mind-set.

It's funny how the member from Rosemont did not spend a long time, Mr. Speaker, talking about his department. I assume that the member from Rosemont couldn't find anything that was very good to say about his department. I wonder if the minister, who may enter again . . . he spoke on the motion.

At the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker — if I do conclude them — at the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I intend to move an amendment. That will give the Minister of Social Services the opportunity to re-enter the debate. So I would ask the minister to carefully consider his department and perhaps answer some of the questions we have raised. It might be an opportunity for you to deal with some of the comments in the report of the Ombudsman.

Mr. Speaker, the amount allocated for social assistance in 1985-86, the year which was concluded on Monday of this week, there's 192.895 million. The amount allocated this year is less. I wonder who in this Assembly honestly believes, with this government managing its affairs . . . That's the most serious blight on the economy of the province. With this government managing the affairs of the province, I wonder who in this Assembly believes, with this government in harness, with wheat prices failing rapidly — something this government doesn't seem to be aware of because we have not been able to bring it to your attention; I haven't heard any position in this government with respect to that — in the light, Mr. Speaker . . . And potash prices softening; oil in a state of unimagined decline — I wonder, Mr. Speaker, how many people in this Assembly genuinely believe we're going to spend \$2 million less. I wonder if the member from Rosthern believes that. I see him looking at me intently. I wonder if the member from Rosthern believes that we're going to spend \$2 million less.

I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say that when the accounts of this province are totalled . . . I say, Mr. Speaker, when the accounts of this province are totalled and when we get the public accounts for the year ending March 31, 1986, I say our debt per capita will be higher than Manitoba's.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's worth digressing for a moment. Oh, you're still looking for some way to call me to account. Well, I say, Mr. Speaker, if you can find it, use it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to members opposite that there is no way that we, as opposition, can look at this document and make any sensible estimate as to how much the real debt is going to be. I say, Mr. Speaker, that the real debt is going to be a lot higher than the \$600 million which you stated. They stated 360 million, but nobody believes that — 389 million, but nobody believes that. Members opposite don't believe that. The reason why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they don't believe it is because of figures such as this. You understate the amount you're going to spend on social assistance.

Mr. Speaker, the next figure in the *Estimates* about which I want to comment is the amount that's allocated for the family income plan. Mr. Minister, the amount there is

increased, but it's only been increased by 4 per cent. I suggest that the number of people in this province who are taking less rather than more, the demands upon the family income plan are going to increase dramatically. It's going to be a lot more than 4 per cent.

In addition, Mr. Minister, to overstating revenues, which I believe you have, Mr. Speaker, this government has also understated its expenditures. The Minister of Social Services, whom I no doubt will be delighted to get back into this debate — I have no doubt he'll be delighted — perhaps the Minister of Social Services will explain to me how it can be that the Saskatchewan income plan . . . They're going to drink the water, Mr. Speaker.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that I took a drink of water while . . . just for a second time, while the Premier came in. And I've no doubt he's wanting to listen to this, just as the member from Meadow Lake wanted to listen so badly to what the teachers had to say to him last night, and listening with such glee as the teachers groaned as he answered questions about Gainers.

But the Minister of Social Services will no doubt want to rise in this debate and tell us how it can be that, with the number of senior citizens increasing, the Saskatchewan's income plan, senior citizens' benefits, is going down by 200,000. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask members opposite how that can be.

(1600)

I say this government has intentionally understated the amount it is spending on the senior citizens. That is of statutory benefit. It's not something that's in the discretion of this government. It's not something they can nigger, squeeze away at. They must spend the money. Mr. Speaker, they are stating that they are decreasing the expenditures. I say that's nuts. You're increasing the expenditures. There are more senior citizens, and the expenditure for this section, Mr. Speaker, is bound to go up.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, as well, for a moment, deal with something that's dear to my heart, and I know it will be to the member from Saskatoon Eastview, and that's the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission. Mr. Speaker, the amount spent on the Legal Aid Commission is up by a modest \$200,000. Mr. Speaker, once again this is treating the poorest in our society with the harshest treatment.

Our office discovered the other day, Mr. Speaker, that the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission will no longer handle appeals in criminal cases. I say to members opposite that that is an unfortunate deterioration in the quality of service we provide to poor people. I know members opposite who are of the legal profession will understand when I say that power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. A judge from which there is no appeal is a judge that many lawyers are hesitant to appear in front of. The Legal Aid Commission is now no longer handling appeals in criminal sentences. That means, I think, that there is no effective check on the trial

judges. It is the first time in this province since the legal aid plan was set up that we have not had appeals in the case of a criminal sentence.

I wonder if members opposite, all of whom have an opportunity to join the debate, I wonder if members opposite would like to — if I give you the opportunity to join the debate, that is — I wonder if members opposite would like to stand in this House and tell this House how you believe that abolishing appeals in criminal cases is in the best interests of Saskatchewan. I say it's an unfortunate deterioration in the services which we have provided.

This province has a rather proud history in that respect, Mr. Speaker. It was a former chief justice and distinguished citizen of this province, Mr. Justice Edward Culliton, who began the process of encouraging — I think that's not too strong a term — encouraging appeals against sentences in criminal cases. The man of immense compassion didn't always agree with his decisions. I stated my public disagreement with a report he issued on the SGI affair, but no one would deny the man's compassions. In a province with this kind of history, the government with not sense of what this province means, with no sense of what we're about, Mr. Speaker, has abolished the appeals in criminal sentences. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that that is most unfortunate.

I want to deal for a moment with the allowances for day care. Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh I know I've got the member from Saskatoon Westmount on the rampage now. Mention day care and you've got a wild animal on the loose. For I say, Mr. Speaker, that to deny the need for day care in this day and age is equivalent to King Knut sitting on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean and deny the tide.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know — I don't profess to be enough of a philosopher to be able to say whether or not we would all be better off if one parent worked, one stayed home with the children. That's the life-style which our family chose. We did so voluntarily. We did so of our own free will. We happen to be at a stage in life and in a position when we can do that. Mr. Speaker, there are a great many families who do not have the option of having one parent at home. There are a great many families, some of whom have to get by on the pitifully inadequate minimum wage, who don't have any option but to have both parents working.

Mr. Speaker, there are a large number of single parent families. This government believes it is a crime for such people to be on welfare, and they continue to punish them as if they were criminals. I don't think that's necessarily true. Our society might be better served if we give single parents an adequate allowance so that they might stay home with children. But that certainly isn't the attitude of this government, and a great many single parents do not want to spend their entire lives cooped up with small children. So day care is a fact of life.

Day cares have the children during their most productive years and during a very formative period. Napoleon said, "Give me a child until he's six, and you can have him thereafter."

An Hon. Member: — I thought that was the Jesuits who said that.

Mr. Shillington: — I do not believe it was the Jesuits. The Minister from Social Services wants to enter the debate. I say to the member from Social Services, you will get the chance to enter the debate and defend our child care program in due course.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that day care . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I see I'm getting all the members into the debate. You all have a chance to re-enter the debate. When I sit down, you all will have the chance to re-enter the debate . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the member looks at the clock. I say, when I sit down. Until I sit down, you have no opportunity to enter the debate.

Mr. Speaker, I say that day care has children during their most formative period, until they're six. It's an extremely important age. I think it behooves society to treat those years with the same care as we do the later years in which they're in school. Now, Mr. Speaker, our schools are not all they might be, and they're getting to be a great deal less than they have been under this administration. But, Mr. Speaker, the amount spent per child after the age of six is several times what it is when they're in day care.

I honestly wish members opposite would take a tour of all the day care facilities in your riding and then, those who are parents, I wish they would ask themselves: would I want my child spending eight hours a day in that facility? Because I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't leave a dog in some of the day care facilities. I honestly wouldn't. Some of them are simply not adequate. And this is the next generation. This is one of the real influences we have on the future, is how we treat, how we nurture and nourish the young in our society.

I say with respect to day care we're doing an abominable job of it. Members opposite might ask themselves what can be done with respect to day care. I say that the former administration commissioned a report on day care and the report on day care set out a number of positive steps which, if implemented . . .

The member from Saskatoon Riversdale lost a great opportunity, and I was sorry to see that. She might have seized the initiative; she might have shown some courage; she might have grappled with the problem; and if she had done that, she might have made a lasting mark on our society. Her courage failed her. No doubt the Minister of Social Services had her on a short leash, but her report really accomplished nothing.

Mr. Speaker, if we were to do nothing more than to implement the recommendations of the 1981 committee on day care, most of the problems of day care would be solved, and they would be solved at a cost which is affordable. That report did not recommend anything outlandish. I don't know whether it's viewed that universal day care is outlandish. But at any rate, Mr. Speaker, it's not recommended. What is recommended in the report is affordable. I have met with a number of day care groups across the province, and they have all said the same thing to me, and that is that the report, if

implemented, will cure most of the problems and will probably give us the best day care system in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government makes a number of outlandish claims of being world-class. We are claimed to be world-class with respect to any number of things. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if members opposite wouldn't like to be Canada-class. Let's just do something that's the best in Canada. If we were to implement the 1981 report on day care I believe we would find ourselves with the best day care system in Canada. It is affordable. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that for those few of you — Deputy, Deputy, Deputy, Deputy Speaker — I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with respect to those few of you who are going to be back after the next election, you may just get an opportunity to see something happen to day care.

The next administration which follows yours is not going to neglect young people the way you have. The next administration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will be fully conscious of the fact that in young people we have in our hands the most precious resource. And it behooves us to behave like it and not neglect them. Mr. Speaker, it's a literal truth that on the average in Canada zoo keepers are paid almost exactly twice what we pay our day care workers. What that means is we pay people in our society twice as much to look after animals as we do after humans. I say that is a misplaced priority.

One of the things that we have to do is pay day care workers a decent wage so that there is some stability, and so that they can attract the very best people for working with young people.

Mr. Speaker, I say, with respect to the allowances for day care, it's up by seven-tenths of 1 per cent. That's nowhere near adequate. There are any number of problems. There aren't enough spaces. The facilities which are available don't have enough facilities. I recall subpoenaing — somewhat by chance — I recall subpoenaing one director of a day care to court one time. I won't use the name of the day care; it would serve no purpose. Suffice it to say that the day care, the facilities . . . this was just purely a lack of money. The director knew full well that it wasn't adequate. The facilities for the children consisted of a few stuffed animals and a television.

I don't know if members opposite think that's what they want their kids doing for about eight hours a day. It isn't what I want Ryan and Tara, our children, doing for eight hours a day. But that was the facilities available. There was no yard in which the children could go out and play. In any case, I had her there in winter, and it was too cold. But that was the facilities available in one day care — a day care which I think was as good as any. It certainly was physically located in one of the more affluent parts of the city.

Mr. Speaker, we need to spend, not a great deal more, but we need to spend more on day care. We need to improve and enhance this and, if we were to implement the 1981 report, we would have the best system in Canada. If you want to see it happen, stick around. Because one of the things that the NDP are pledged to do, in this area, as in a number of other areas, is to provide first-class facilities and services for young people. We are not going to

neglect them as this government has.

Mr. Speaker, the grants for senior citizens' services. One would expect it's not just the very young who are in for a rough ride; it's also the very old. Mr. Speaker, I note that in item number 11, the grants for senior citizens' service; the funding has remained static.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a huge protest from the Saskatchewan public about the level of spending on health care. Well, I notice the members opposite doubt that comment. I notice they've been reticent in attending meetings which have been called by the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses. They've been very reticent to go and explain their successes.

An Hon. Member: — The Premier can't go to every small town.

Mr. Shillington: — Well, that's right. The Premier hasn't got time to go to small trifling communities like Estevan, who elected him; nor apparently can the Minister of Health go.

(1615)

I say to members opposite that the level of funding in health care has become a matter of serious concern. The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses — I suppose this is another group who are going to be labelled "vicious" because they dare to point out that the record of this government isn't letter-perfect. Mr. Speaker, they point to a serious problem with hospitals. It is a problem that the next government is going to face, meet, and solve. It's going to happen (a) because there's going to be a change in administration; and (b) because I and my colleagues have invested a good amount of time talking to nurses individually, explaining our policy before groups which you have been afraid to attend.

One of the things that has become apparent to my colleagues and I as we travel around the province is that there is a shortage of staff, but there's also a shortage . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I know members opposite who believe that there's enough staff . . . Well the member from Saskatoon Mayfair is on the rampage. I say, you have an opportunity to get into the debate and I would be delighted to hear . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I will I will be delighted to hear you explain how you think there's enough staff in the hospitals. Because if you believe that, then you're the only person in Saskatchewan that does. The Minister of Health knows better because he will not go to meetings and explain his policy.

I say, if you think there's enough staff in hospitals, then there's a virtually endless number of meetings for you to attend, and you can go there, and you can explain to the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses and other interested people, Mr. Speaker . . . He's deserting the ship too.

I must say, I never, Mr. Speaker, underestimate the intelligence or the shrewdness of a banker. They're always one step ahead of the maddening crowd. I guess they've got to be, being a banker — one step ahead of the maddening crowd. You had enough sense to quit. I give you credit for that. Mr. Speaker, you can always depend

on the bankers to be on step ahead of the maddening crowd.

Mr. Speaker, it is apparent that one of the problems in the health system is that there is a large number of elderly people in the health system who don't have any sudden, quick emergency. What they do have, Mr. Speaker, is a large number of senior citizens who are in hospitals. And the solution to getting some of the senior citizens out, some of whom require intensive care, there must be more nursing homes for them. Some of them don't. Some of them could stay in their homes if there were a greater range of services available. Sometimes they need some rather simple things, needs some small assistance with health care and small assistance with putting on storm windows — assistance with small things, to stay in their own home. They may need one meal a day.

Mr. Speaker, I note that grants for senior citizens' services are static — that, at a time when the number of senior citizens is increasing, and that, at a time when the need is being made painfully apparent to the government by the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses. So I say to members opposite, I say to members opposite, that this is another area which should have been increased, and which is going to create some very severe pressures by holding it static.

Mr. Speaker, it is not obvious to me in the *Estimates* what is happening with respect to the number of day care workers. I believe, however, that the number of day care workers has increased by a grand total of seven. I see, Mr. Speaker, in the *Estimates*, regional operations were 701 last year. They are 708. So, Mr. Speaker, the number of welfare workers has increased by six and one-half — that in the entire province, in the light of what the Ombudsman's report says. And I know Mr. Speaker was absent when I read that. He indicates with a certain sadness on his face that he heard it all downstairs on his television.

Mr. Speaker, I say that we need to increase the number of social workers by a lot more than six and one-half. We've either got to get the number of social welfare recipients down, which we clearly have to do — we've got to get those people working again — and we've got to get the number of welfare workers up. And we clearly have to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with another area before I sit down, before I take my chair. That has to do with urban affairs. Mr. Speaker, another area that the shortage of services is becoming painfully apparent in, is the area of urban affairs. Mr. Speaker, the expenditure on urban affairs is apparent to anyone who visits a community — who even visits a community. Mr. Speaker, you can travel down a road, any street or highway in Regina, and the result of inadequate funding in urban affairs is readily apparent. The roads are deteriorating. They are rough, Mr. Speaker, and there are pot-holes in them.

I was talking to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I gather the member from — now the hopeful candidate from Regina South who hasn't the courage to face the electorate in Regina North, who escapes to what he believes to be a safe Tory enclave in the southern part of

the city.

Well I got a message from the member from Regina North. The riding of Regina South is no safer than it is in Regina North. The people throughout this city — the people throughout this city — are fed up with this government. And they don't have to go far to find out why they're fed up. They don't have to go far to find out why they're fed up.

One of the reasons they're fed up has to do with inadequate funding to municipalities. As I said, that funding is painfully apparent with respect to roads. Drive down any street in Regina, Mr. Speaker, and the inadequate funding, and the effect of the inadequate funding, becomes readily apparent. Mr. Speaker, the amount by which the Urban Affairs has increased has gone up by about 3 per cent, the amount in the revenue-sharing pool, Mr. Speaker. That, Mr. Speaker, is just simply not adequate.

An Hon. Member: — How are we making out, Ned?

Mr. Shillington: — I'm rushing towards the conclusion of my remarks. I'm not rushing, Mr. Speaker; I'm absolutely stampeding towards the conclusion of these remarks.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the 3 per cent, Mr. Speaker, we predicted 3 per cent in the revenue pool . . . (inaudible) . . . This is enough. There is so much more we can say. Mr. Speaker, that is just simply not enough. It is going to result in an increase in the urban mill rate and, I suspect, further deterioration in the services provided by urban municipalities as they struggle to try to deal with inadequate budgets.

The vast majority, Mr. Speaker, of the amount of money which an urban municipality gets, comes from the provincial government. When the provincial government tries to pay and to find that 200 million it needs to pay interest, when it tries to find that 200 million and it does so by shaving and chiselling away at the amount they pay urban municipalities, Mr. Speaker, that is in effect a tax transfer. That in effect is a transfer, Mr. Speaker, of the tax burden from the province to the urban municipalities.

Members opposite may disbelieve that. But I say to members opposite that they might have found canvassing a poll in Regina North East to be illustrative. I remember canvassing . . . I remember running into the member from Regina North and he was canvassing a poll . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, he's not yet and he never will be. He's the member from Regina North and that's all he'll ever be. But I remember running into the member from Regina North. He was canvassing a poll in Regina North East. And I recall, Mr. Speaker, the member didn't find it a very pleasant experience. I'm not going to tell tales out of school, but suffice it to say that the then minister and now private member, did not find it a pleasant experience.

One of the reasons why he didn't find it a pleasant experience was because of taxes. And one of the taxes which they were concerned about was their property tax. They were not, Mr. Speaker, just concerned about the property improvement grants, though they were concerned about that; they were also concerned, Mr.

Speaker, about the level of property taxes. Over the last two years inflation has increased by about 10 per cent, the amount of the grants to every municipality have increased by 6 per cent. That's a 4 per cent shortfall that has fallen on . . . right there.

Mr. Speaker, since 1984 — indeed, if you want to go back a little further, since 1982, Mr. Speaker, the increase in the grants given to urban municipalities has been about 16 per cent. That's half the rate of inflation. And the burden, Mr. Speaker, has fallen on the urban . . . right there.

So I say to members opposite: if you think you're doing a grand job in urban municipalities, and if you think that all is right with the world, then call an election. I say to members opposite, I think I know one of the reasons why you're in no hurry to call an election. I think I know one of the reasons why you are fleeing from the public — because I remember meeting the member from Regina North in the North East by-election, and I remember his experience. He wasn't enjoying it.

During that North East by-election members opposite had a small taste of what it's going to be like . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I am not. I ran into you in front of the mall.

Mr. Speaker: — Order. The member knows that we cannot use terms like that, whether we're on our feet or sitting in the chair, and I would ask the member to refrain.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons why they are in no hurry to call an election, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons is because they had a small taste of what the electorate have in store for them. And they got it during the North East by-election.

Now members opposite may believe that there's something unique about North East. They may believe there's something unique about Regina. Well I say to members opposite, if you think there's something unique about Regina, then you call an election — you call an election. And you can win in the rest of the province; Regina will go its own separate way.

(1630)

I say to members opposite, there is nothing unique about this city. There's nothing unique about Regina — given the fact that there are a large number of public servants who work in Regina; given that fact, Mr. Speaker, trends may develop first in Regina. But it has been my experience that a trend which develop in Regina, spreads to the rest of the province.

This province — unlike Alberta, which is, I suppose, three communities: Calgary, Alberta, and the rural areas; unlike Manitoba, which is two: Winnipeg and the rest of the province — this province is all one community. How the cities go, the countries go. The movements may start in one area and spread to others areas, but this province is small enough and enough people have rural roots and relatives in rural areas, the trends which develop in the cities spread to the country.

So I say to members opposite, if you've got a problem in

Regina, eventually you're going to have a problem in Saskatoon, as you have. You've got to look long and hard to find somebody in Saskatoon who believes you people are going to win the election . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I wish you'd give us a chance to knock on some doors during an election. I wish members were something more than cheap bravado.

I wish you would take an opportunity, I really wish you would take an opportunity to put your courage to the test. Put it in the fire. Call an election. Because I'll tell you what's going to happen — you're going to get your feathers scalded off. You're going to get your feathers scalded right off your back. You won't just be . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I do feel something slipping; it's the popularity of this government. I felt something slipping for about two years. And it has slipped markedly.

I don't what the pollsters that you people have got are saying. I know what independent pollsters are saying. I know what Maison said. I know what the University of Manitoba says. What those independent pollsters said is that there has been a slow but steady erosion of support in this government. It did not occur quickly. There was a time, Mr. Speaker, there was a time when the members opposite were 30 per cent ahead in the polls. For the member from Souris-Cannington we will acknowledge that fact to you; at one point in time you were 30 per cent ahead. There has been a slow and steady erosion in the polls to the point where we have a very modest lead, a very modest lead.

I suppose the election can be won by anyone. I don't think very many people, however, believe that you're going to pull it out of the fire. I don't think members opposite believe they're going to pull it out of the fire, or they would have gone.

Mr. Speaker, I note as well that there is a modest increase provided to the Wascana Centre Authority. I was hoping, Mr. Speaker, that we might see a correction in a policy which I thought was most unfortunate. Mr. Speaker, last year, I believe it was last year, there was a change in government policy, a change whereby the amount given to the Wascana Authority was no longer a statutory amount. Mr. Speaker, at one time the amount given to the Wascana Authority was a statutory amount; the amount was shared according to a predetermined authority between Regina, Ottawa, and the provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, there were times when the government at Ottawa was hard pressed, and we were affluent, and they didn't change the formula. Mr. Speaker, there were times when the city of Regina was hard pressed, but they didn't change the formula. This government arbitrarily, with no forethought, with no understanding of what the Wascana Centre was about, how it had developed — and more important, no vision of what it might be — this government in the 1985 budget made a determination that they were going to change the formula, and they did so arbitrarily.

I had hoped, Mr. Speaker, that this year would have seen a return to the formula which served Wascana Centre so well for so long. I had hoped you might recognize the

error of your ways. That is no longer the case, Mr. Speaker. I say, Mr. Speaker, that this city has been done a real disservice by this government.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many ways in which the city of Regina has suffered at the hands of this administration. It is almost as if this administration came into office the day they were elected, said to themselves, all public servants hate Conservatives, the city is full of public servants, therefore we have no hope of salvaging anything in Regina, and proceeded accordingly.

The list of projects important to this city which are fallen by the wayside is truly awesome. Again I recall when the now Minister of . . . He's changed his portfolio so often I've forgotten what he's doing.

An Hon. Member: — What was he before?

Mr. Shillington: — He was minister of energy before.

An Hon. Member: — No, he was just Deputy Premier

Mr. Shillington: — No, no, he served a bit.

An Hon. Member: — The small business.

Mr. Shillington: — The small business, right you are. I remember when the Minister of Small Business was Minister of Urban Affairs. I remember asking repeated questions in the summer of 1982 about the multimodal station. Nothing came of that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in 1985 they amended The Wascana Authority Act so that they would not have to contribute as much to the Wascana Authority. Mr. Speaker, they have let a number of other projects go. They have transferred out of Regina a number of Crown corporations.

I wonder Mr. Speaker, if it's always in the best interest to be transferring members of the public service out of Regina. I may say that I do not understand why it was done in the way it was. I do not understand, Mr. Speaker, why the Crown corporations were transferred in the way they were. I don't understand why it is that clerks and stenographers — people who are not in any sense management — could not transfer back to the regular public service. I do not understand why a government would be so harsh.

Mr. Speaker, public servants in those Crown corporations were told they couldn't transfer back to the government, they had to be transferred. Well I say, Mr. Speaker, that is callous, that is unfair. A goodly number of the people who work for government are married women. They are simply not in a position that they could transfer to Swift Current or Melville. Their husbands work in Regina. Their husbands can't find jobs in Melville or Swift Current, and thus they are not in a position to move. I don't understand why spouses who were otherwise employed within the city of Regina — I do not understand why spouses could not transfer back into public service. I don't understand why this government would be so harsh and unfeeling.

I know you may think that all public servants dislike the ground you walk on. But if you keep it up, it's going to be

literally true. I just don't understand why you would be so callous. I do not understand why married people, most of them women, who are employed in non-management positions, could not transfer back into public service.

I don't understand why you wouldn't want to leave those jobs available for people in Melville or Swift Current. I don't understand your thinking. I don't understand why you wouldn't free up those jobs so they are available in Melville, and why you wouldn't allow the present office holders to transfer back into the public service.

I call upon whichever one of the sterling lights of members opposite is the minister in charge of Public Service Commission — I call upon the minister in charge of the Public Service Commission whose brilliance and identity escapes me. Is it the member from Maple Creek? I call upon the member from Maple Creek to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I call upon the Minister of Small Business then, to re-examine the approach. I call upon the minister in charge to re-examine that. That really was unfair.

I know members opposite don't care a lot about what happens in the city of Regina. I know you're prepared to let the current member from Lakeview, and so on, I know you're prepared to let those members sink because you don't care about the public service vote. But I'll tell you, it was harsh and it was unfair. And it's so unnecessary. Why would you not free up those jobs, let them transfer back into public service? Free up the jobs in Melville and in Swift Current; you'll do yourself a favour and you'll do the public service a favour.

So I say to members opposite that you ought to re-examine that policy. I say to members opposite that I would suggest that you re-examine the policy with which you are transferring the public.

But I want to deal as well, Mr. Speaker, with the question of the transfer of the Crown corporations themselves. I don't have a lot to say about Agdevco. It does have a large computer program, and I'm not sure how it's going to operate 160 miles present.

Mr. Speaker, the transfer of the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation to Melville — I really wonder whether that was in the best interests of all Saskatchewan farmers. I was truly amazed to find out what the walk-in traffic was. Walk-in traffic, I gather, is 50,000 people a year. There are 50,000 people a year — 54, to be exact — who walk into the front door and who want to know something about "my contract."

That is an amazing traffic. I wonder how many other government departments have walk-in traffic of 54,000 people a year. I suggest that there aren't very many people, there are not very many who have a walk-in traffic of 54,000.

I really wonder, Mr. Speaker, if it is in the best interest of the Saskatchewan people to have that agency transferred to Melville. That will no doubt be convenient for the people of Melville, Saltcoats, Esterhazy, Yorkton, Pelly, etc., but I wonder if that's going to be as convenient for the people in Shaunavon or Assiniboia-Gravelbourg or Kindersley.

I wonder if the people from Kindersley are going to be overjoyed at driving to Melville. A goodly number of people in Kindersley, Rosetown, Maple Creek, etc. a goodly number of people from those constituencies travel to Regina on a regular basis. And if they don't come on a regular basis, there's always some business that they can do when they're here. If nothing else, they . . .

Mr. Speaker, the transfer of those Crown corporations to Melville, I suggest that simply was not in the best interests of the farmers. I do not know who was served by that. No doubt it's a great deal simpler for farmers in the immediate area. But I recall, Mr. Speaker, I recall visiting the community of Melville. I visited with quite a large number of people. We did some main-streeting. We visited with the chamber of commerce.

An Hon. Member: — Anybody show up for your meeting?

Mr. Shillington: — Aha, I tell you, when we walked out of the meeting with the chamber of commerce, I remember saying to the member from Regina North East and the member from Pelly, who I was with, I was saying, well, I am sure glad I'm not running as a Conservative in Melville. I remember saying that when I walked out of the meeting. These gentlemen will testify to that fact; that was my comments as I walked out the door: I'm sure glad I'm not running as a Conservative in Melville.

Well, I think I know why the crop insurance was transferred to Melville. I think it had something to do with the same perception by members opposite that they wouldn't want to run as a Conservative in Melville.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent a little less time in Swift Current than I have in Melville, so I'm not quite as able to judge why Agdevco was transferred to Swift Current. I will say that I have met our candidate in Swift Current and I was very, very impressed. I was very impressed with the background, the ability, the integrity of John Penner. It struck me that in terms of his outlook and his philosophy on life, in terms of his background, he was an ideal representative for that community.

He's been an alderman on city council; he's been a business man in town. I do not know what more one could ask for a candidate. So when I ask myself, why would they transfer Agdevco to Swift Current? Why would they go to the additional expense of setting up a new computer program, since I assume they're not going to use the telephone line, and busying new computer hardware and paying travel expenses. I wonder if it had anything at all to do with the fact that in the city of Swift Current we have the best of all possible candidates in John Penner.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, members are encouraging me to go around the entire province constituency by constituency. I don't know whether I would test Mr. Speaker's patience or not if I did that. I do

want to deal, Mr. Speaker, with the Department of Labour.

An Hon. Member: — Is there a line in there for jelly beans?

Mr. Shillington: — I do not see a vote for jelly beans.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to deal with the Department of Labour. I recall in this Legislative Assembly in the fall of 1982 debating Bill 102. And I recall one rather warm summer day in August in here telling the current member from Yorkton what I thought was going to happen. Now I recall members opposite disbelieving what I was saying. All I can say is that I vastly understated the damage which has been done by Bill 104. I vastly understated the damage that had been done.

And I recall, Mr. Speaker, finding that out by sort of personal experience. In another of the elections in which members were engaged — this was a federal election — I recall being sent out of my own riding and being asked to go up and canvass in a poll in the northern part of Regina. I saw, by the standards of my riding, enormous new houses, and asking myself: what on earth am I doing canvassing in what has got to be an impossible poll?

Well it wasn't impossible, because I found out as I began to go door to door that these were lots which had been sold by the city. By and large these had been bought by tradesmen who built their own houses. These large houses were in fact owned by tradesmen who built them themselves. And they were furious about what had happened to them. A great many of those people hadn't worked, Mr. Speaker, in months. There was a large number of them hadn't worked since 1982. The last work they got was in 1982.

They were having difficulty paying their mortgages. Wives were scrambling around trying to find work. And I say no . . . All of them talked with . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll tell you, this much is true, the member from Saskatoon Mayfair. When they spoke about the government, they spoke with the same energy that the member from Quill Lakes speaks. So one might have mistaken them for the member from Quill Lakes. But in fact it was not the member Quill Lakes, even though they spoke in terms that sounded a great deal like that. They were every bit as angry.

It comes as no surprise, Mr. Speaker, that we won that poll. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in that riding now represented by the member from the water-closet club, in that entire riding, we lost four polls. We lost four polls in that riding. Four polls — that's all we lost. We won that particular poll that I was in. We won it by a very large margin, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what has happened to the trades really . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, you're going to find out. You found out in north east. The member from Lloydminster believes we're going to find out in the next election. I say we did.

There are a large number of tradespeople who live in north east. It's that kind of riding. A large number of

those people, being electricians, carpenters, plumbers, take a great deal of pride in their work. That's what they want to do. They want to be electricians; they want to do carpentry; they want to do plumbing. A large number of them haven't done it for a lengthy period of time. If you don't know how they voted, then I suggest you check the report of the chief electoral officer for the by-election in Regina North East, and you'll find out . . . (inaudible) . . . Well if the members are so overwrought with courage, you might call an election. I say that members of this caucus are ready for an election, are calling for one, and you people are afraid of it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Talk is cheap — talk is cheap. You can sit here with all the bravado you want, but I'll tell you, if you people have any courage at all, you can call an election. You haven't done so.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments to Bill 104 have done enormous damage. The Minister of Labour, so-called, the former minister of Labour, the current member from Melville, did an enormous amount of damage. When the member from Yorkton went to the annual meeting of the federation of labour and was greeted with a stony silence, he got a great deal better than what he deserved. The damage he has done has been enormous.

I met people from all the different trades, and I found skilled carpenters working for five, six bucks an hour. I found electricians working for eight bucks an hour if they could find work, and they generally couldn't. What happened was the combination of Bill 104 and the amendment to the construction labour relations councils Act. The two of them together enabled some unscrupulous contractors to take advantage of the system. Mr. Speaker, it isn't just the tradespeople, it isn't just the tradespeople who have got badly hurt by this government.

I was sitting in the Embassy café this morning with my campaign manager. I had a gentleman walk up to me who will not be identified; I wouldn't unloose the wrath of this government. But he said to me, he identified his business, and I won't give you that — the industry is too small; you'd know it — but suffice to say it is related to construction. He said the last four years have just . . .

The first thing he said, he says, when's the election? The same as everybody else asks. I said, well I don't know. I said, well I don't know when the election is. I said, well, I don't know when the election is; we hope it's soon but we don't know. He said, well I hope it's soon. He said, I'll tell you, these last four years have just about killed me.

I don't know the man well. It would surprise me to find out he was a New Democrat, but there's no doubt, I think, about how he's voting.

Combined with Bill 104 and with the construction labour relations Act, this government has combined with that a tendering policy which must be the worst in Canada. I do not believe there is in the Dominion of Canada a worse tendering . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Put your hearing aid back on again. I do not believe there is in the

Dominion of Canada a tendering system which is worse than what we have here. There are no rules.

I know contractors and architects who are prepared to play by "the rules." They're prepared to do what has to be done to get a contract from this government. But there simply aren't any rules. Nothing works for them. Nothing works for them.

An Hon. Member: — What about swimming pool contracts?

Mr. Shillington: — If you had handled any single one of your problems as well as the swimming pool problem was handled when we were in office, you wouldn't be afraid of an election. If any one of your problems that you had, had been handled with the same integrity that that was handled, you wouldn't have the problems you have today.

In tendering, Mr. Speaker, there simply are no rules; everything is done according to the whim of the minister. We no longer have a tendering system. We have a call for proposals, the terms of which are so subjective that nobody can know how a minister is going to judge the tenders. And thus what happens is that it is done by the whim of the minister. And this has hurt everybody who's connect in any way, shape, or form with construction. There simply aren't the rules.

And that's what this guy said. He didn't say, I'll play by whatever rules are established. I think the person had some integrity. But he said, you know, there are simply no rules at all. And there aren't.

I'll tell you who gets the contracts. The people who get the contracts are the friends of the government. Now members opposite may think that that's a great policy. It may do wonders for the treasury of the Conservative Party. Your treasury may be overflowing, but I'll tell you, I'll say to members opposite, that if you want to get an earful, go and talk to the contractors. Go and talk to the contractors, talk to the architects, talk to everyone else who's at all involved in the construction industry. Because I say, Mr. Speaker, that the entire construction industry has just been devastated.

Mr. Speaker, there is no real meaningful attempt to in any way deal with that problem. The policy, planning, and research is down by one person. The labour relations department, an office which needs more assistants rather than less, is down one staff person. Labour standards is down one staff person. Pension benefits is static. Technical safety services, in the aftermath of the brilliance with which you handled the Polly Redhot problem, that staff is down by four.

I think, Mr. Speaker, I said that I was going to, at the conclusion of my remarks, move an amendment to the motion. I will do that now. I therefore move, seconded by the member from Shaunavon:

That all the words after "that" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

That this Assembly expresses its deep

disappointment with the budget because:

1. It fails to eliminate the unfair flat tax;
2. It fails to eliminate the unfair PC sales tax on used cars and trucks;
3. It fails to restore property tax rebates to home owners, farmers and small business;
4. It fails to contain a positive and comprehensive job creation program;
5. It does not contain adequate measures to reduce the cost of farm fuel, farm chemicals and fertilizer; and
6. It does not express vigorous opposition to the proposals of the Nielsen task force report which would be disastrous for Saskatchewan agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's apparent that I could have carried on for a great deal longer. There was a number of these things I did not cover. However, Mr. Speaker, I will move this, seconded by the member from Kindersley.

It is obvious I will be voting for the amendment and against the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — I said Kindersley — seconded by the member from Shaunavon.

Mr. Speaker: — The debate continues on the motion and the amendment concurrent.

Mr. Katzman: — Mr. Speaker, for half an hour speech that sure took a long time. Mr. Speaker, I've got a lot to say about it. I see the time it is; therefore, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:01 p.m.