

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. On behalf of the member for Regina North West who is not present today, I want to introduce 27 students; they're grade 5 students at Al Pickard elementary school, accompanied by their teacher, Ms. V. Taylor. Regrettably the member is not present, and I will not be able to attend with the students. I do hope, though, that their period here during the question period will be enlightening and they'll come to have some understanding of how democracy operates, Mr. Speaker.

While I'm on my feet, if I might, Mr. Speaker, introduce another group, also on behalf of the member from Regina North West who are also from Al Pickard elementary school. This time there's 26 students in grade 5 and grade 6, accompanied by their teacher, John Lukomski. I would ask all members to welcome them here, and I hope their stay is enjoyable.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to also, on behalf of the member from Regina North West, welcome a group of students from St. Peter's elementary school here in Regina who are seated in the east gallery. It's good to see them here. They're accompanied by Ms. Bolen, their teacher, who I want to extend a special welcome to — I worked with Ms. Bolen on the Regina Catholic School Teachers' Association — as well as chaperons Mr. and Mrs. Herman, Mrs. Ritco, and Mr. and Mrs. Wylie who, I am informed, are from Australia. It's good to have them here. I hope that the students and their chaperons enjoy the proceedings of the legislature here this afternoon and go away having learned something about how our system of government, our parliamentary system, works. And if I am able to, I would be only too pleased to say hello to them afterwards when they leave the gallery. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the members opposite and, on behalf of the members from the government side today, welcome the students from Al Pickard elementary school, in particular, since this school is located in that part of the city where my riding is also located — and I'm sorry that the member from that particular area was not able to be here today — but I certainly want to join with those who have already spoken and welcome the grade 5 students from Al Pickard, and also the grade 5 and 6 class as well from Al Pickard elementary school.

I'm sure that you'll have a very interesting day today. And I certainly would look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you after question period, and certainly want, as well, to welcome on behalf of the government

members the students from St. Peter elementary school which, I understand, borders very closely the riding of the member from Regina North. So perhaps all members could join once again in welcoming these students here today.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Staff Cuts to Public "Watch-dog" Agencies

**Mr. Koskie:** — I'd like to introduce the question, in the absence of the Premier and the Deputy Premier, to the Deputy Deputy Premier. And the question, Mr. Deputy Deputy Premier, deals with this. It deals with your government's attempts to basically undermine the independence of the public "watch-dog" agencies such as the Ombudsman, the Provincial Auditor, and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. I want to ask you, can the Deputy Deputy Premier explain why his government has cut the staff available to the provincial Ombudsman, to the Provincial Auditor, and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that same question had been asked of the Premier a week or so ago. And the Premier indicated at that point in time that the government looked at priorities, that they have placed their priorities on the areas of education and health care, as well as agriculture and the creation of jobs, and that various other departments of governments had to perhaps have a smaller increase, or be held at the same as they had last year.

I think, if you go over the last four years and look at the office of the Ombudsman or the office of the Provincial Auditor or the office of the Human Rights Commission, that they are in fact well-funded, well-funded relative to virtually any other province across the country. I can recall only from previous discussions on this, for example, that the office of the Ombudsman in Saskatchewan receives in excess of twice the amount that the similar position of the Ombudsman in the province of Manitoba receives.

And I that is . . . you know, I think that demonstrates that in fact that this government has in fact treated those groups, that they have their opportunity to function and, I think, are functioning reasonably well.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Minister, are you aware that since you took office that the staff of the Provincial Auditor has been cut from 72 to 63 people? And the basic function of the Provincial Auditor is to supervise the spending of the government of over \$3 billion of taxpayers' money.

I ask you: what do you see as more important than the job of making sure that you're spending the public taxpayers' money efficiently? When you cut the auditor's staff that was designed to make his work more effective, how can you support such an action with such a flimsy excuse as what you're trying to put forward in this Assembly today?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, again I go back to the

suggestion that we, as a government, made a conscious decision that there had to be more money put into the field of agriculture. And we don't apologize for that. We made a conscious decision as well, Mr. Speaker, to put money into the fields of both education, universities, and in health care — and the increase in health this year is in excess of 11 per cent. We see that as a priority, Mr. Speaker. As I see, the Provincial Auditor in fact does his reports, gets his job done, and I haven't heard any great loud screams from the Provincial Auditor that he doesn't have enough people that he can't get his job done, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Koskie:** — A further supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, isn't the real reason for the various staff cuts really to reduce the ability of these "watch-dog" agencies — the provincial Ombudsman, the auditor, the Human Rights Commission? It prevents them from investigating the work and decisions of your government on behalf of the people of this province. In effect, do you not agree that what you're doing is to muzzle the investigation ability of these agencies?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well, I think that's absolutely wrong, Mr. Speaker. The Provincial Auditor's job is to audit the various departments; to audit some Crown corporations, and that particular job is being done. It seems to me that he's getting his work done. The Ombudsman, as I indicated to you, there were years prior to this year where the increase to the Ombudsman was in fact twice as high as the average group. The reality is those agencies have been increased in their funding this year. They are doing their job. They are not as important, as far as we are concerned, as agriculture, health care, education, and the creation of jobs. And I don't think we apologize for that.

The members opposite seem to be bent on priorities of creating larger bureaucracies and more people working for the government. And that's not what we see as the important focus at this point.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the deputy House Leader. Mr. Minister, when you were in opposition you complained endlessly about the treatment accorded the Provincial Auditor at a time when he had 13 per cent more staff than he does now. Since you've taken office, government expenditures have increased by 33 per cent. The Provincial Auditor has filed the longest report he's ever filed, indicating a growing number of administrative problems with this government, and you have cut his staff by 13 per cent since you took office.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is: will you admit, Mr. Minister, the reason why you've cut staff for the Provincial Auditor and the Ombudsman, in the face of a growing work-load, is that you people simply don't want to hear what they've got to say, and you don't want the public to hear what they've got to say.

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well I think that's foolish to say that. I think if you go back in time in the last eight years that I've been in this Assembly, the Provincial Auditor has made small comments with regard to his staff. They've been made in four years when I sat on that side, and he's

probably made the same statement four years since I've sat on this side.

The Provincial Auditor gets his job done. The Provincial Auditor, if he has fault with this government — and I'm sure has got every possible forum that he wants to speak and be critical of this government; I haven't heard a whole lot of that coming out of him — I think the Provincial Auditor should be no different than any other department of government, and I think the funds that are provided to him are satisfactory.

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question. Mr. Minister, you state that the Provincial Auditor has every opportunity to state his views. As an officer of the Assembly he has no opportunity and no forum to make his views known. Apart from some comments which have preceded the odd budget, it would be inappropriate, Mr. Minister, for the Provincial Auditor to publicly attack the government.

Will you admit that the Provincial Auditor has no means of adequately responding to your comments, and that it is, therefore, incumbent on you, as a member of the government, to provide adequate staff so that the public may know whether or not their tax dollars are being efficiently spent?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, many departments of government are down, but let me go back. The member from Quill Lakes made comment that somehow we've underfunded the Ombudsman, and that doesn't seem to me to stop the Ombudsman from being public with regards to the government that he hasn't got his funding.

Now with regards to saying that the Provincial Auditor has no vehicle by which he can attack the government is absolutely ludicrous, Mr. Speaker. He's got the same power here as a Provincial Auditor, the auditors general across this country. If he chooses to be critical of the government, then he has every right to be critical. All he has to do is call a press conference and the folks up there in the gallery would be rushing to him to hear what he has to say. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that he is interested in doing that. He's not interested in making headlines. I haven't heard him. Perhaps the Minister of Finance has heard that he is somehow crying because he doesn't have positions. In my view the Provincial Auditor in this province does a good job; the Provincial Auditor in this province gets his job done, does it in a proper way, and does not seek the public notoriety that perhaps the members opposite would like him to. Be that as it may, that's the way he likes to approach things.

### Choice of Power Plant Site

**Mr. Shillington:** — I have a new question to the deputy Deputy Premier. In the absence of the Premier and the Deputy Premier, I address the question to the deputy Deputy Premier. My questions deal with . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I'm not sure what else we're supposed to do in the absence of the Premier and the Deputy Premier in the same day. You people may complain about the style of our questions. We complain about the attendance in the House during question period.

My questions also deal with this government's arrogant determination to hide information from the public. My question is with respect to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. More than a month ago in this Assembly, the minister in charge was asked to table the environmental and economic studies done by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation prior to your government's decision to build a 5 — \$700 million power plant in the Premier's constituency. At that time, you claimed the decision was not related to politics, and you claimed that SPC management had done extensive economic and environmental studies which supported the decision. Can you tell us, Mr. Minister, when the public will get to see those studies, and whether we'll get to see them before, or after, the election?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, that question was posed to the Deputy Premier and the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. As I recall, he announced that day that the location of that particular project was chosen because of the ability to make an agreement with the state of North Dakota and deal with the Rafferty dam project, and that the reason it was chosen in that location is because that's where the Souris River was, and that's where the choice was.

**Mr. Shillington:** — About the only thing that you've said that is accurate is that the Souris River does go through the Premier's constituency and the Shand is on it. Mr. Minister, I'll grant you that the question was asked of the Deputy Premier a month ago, but our complaint is that the studies have not been forthcoming, and the taxpayers have no more information about this gigantic project now than they did a month ago.

Mr. Minister, it is apparently admitted that SPC has done a detailed economic comparison between the Estevan projects and other options, and it's claimed that SPC has done engineering studies comparing the costs and problems associated with the various power options. If those studies exist, and if they, as the Deputy Premier claimed, support your position, why don't you table them so that the taxpayers of this province can know why you based your decision as you did? Why are you so determined, Mr. Minister, to hide this information from the public?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite — one day they go through a diatribe, Mr. Speaker, of these projects that aren't going to be built, that they're simply paper press releases that you're going to do; they say, no, it's not going to be built; and now they turn around and say, why are you building it here and not building it here? You can only have it one way.

I can tell the members opposite that we're going to build the power station where the Premier announced it, and we're going to build Weyerhaeuser in Prince Albert; they're going to build the bacon plant in North Battleford; they're going to build . . .

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question. Mr. Minister, this government has two kinds of projects: the kind that are

never going to be built, and the kind that should never be built, and that's the total category. Mr. Minister, I asked you to deal with the Estevan power project, the questions which we've been placing you, and the issue is where this government can get the best deal. You claim that the Shand, in the Premier's constituency, can produce power cheaper than all other options. I may, now that the Deputy Premier's returned, actually, if I might be allowed, Mr. Speaker, I'll address the questions to the Deputy Premier.

We've been attempting, Mr. Deputy Premier, to get some information with respect to the Estevan power plant. We've asked your colleague for the studies. Everyone in this province, Mr. Deputy Premier, knows that the SPC needs to build an additional power generation plant; the issue is where the SPC customers can get the best deal. You claim that Shand, in the Premier's constituency, can produce power cheaper than any other options, yet you won't produce the studies to prove that. If it's such a great deal, Mr. Minister, where are the documents?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, we've been through this before on more than one occasion in this Chamber. And the fact is, from an economic point of view, comparing the Shand project to the Coronach project — and there were several options available to us including a buy from Manitoba, including a hydro project on the Churchill River, including one at Gravelbourg, I think called the wheatland project — there were several options available to us.

Based on the economics of the projects that were options for Sask Power, there were two that were clearly leaders as it relates to the economics and the benefits that flow to the consumers. And there was virtually no difference in the economics of Shand over Coronach or vice versa — virtually no difference.

Now I know that the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg was running off at the mouth, Mr. Speaker, on several occasions, trying to convince the world that that particular project could be built for 150 or \$200 million. And it's absolutely preposterous — it's at least \$500 million, Mr. Speaker. And of course, coming from that particular member, we should expect that we have to question everything that he says because he hasn't touched on the truth in 20 years on any issue. And I get a little annoyed with him because of that.

The fact is, because of other benefits that flow from the Shand project — such as irrigation opportunities; such as, Mr. Speaker, industrial water use; such as water management; such as flood control; such as recreation. That, coupled, Mr. Speaker, with an \$82 million saving because of technology coming that will save us \$82 million on scrubbers at Coronach when we go into there down the road, I think was a very responsible decision.

We've made the decision. We've got about 57 or \$58 million Canadian coming from the Americans for that particular project. I think the people of Sask Power deserve a whole lot of credit, Mr. Speaker, for the efforts that they've put into pulling this particular project together.

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question. Mr. Deputy Speaker, having strolled casually into question period 20 minutes late . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. The member is on his feet to ask questions and is making statements, and has been for a while now. I'm going to ask you to get directly to your supplementary.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, if I did not say "new question," I intended to. I wanted to point out to the Deputy Premier that he had misunderstood the question.

The question, Mr. Minister, was not whether or not it's a good project but whether or not you're prepared to give the public the studies which they paid for, which you claim support your position.

SPC has asked for increases of 24 per cent over the next three years. Saskatchewan people want to know how much more their power rates will be going up for the Premier's little project. Will you province, Mr. Minister, that it is the best project by giving us the supporting studies?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — I invite the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, to raise those very same questions in Crown corporations when we deal with it in the traditional way.

Now to support my suggestion of a few minutes ago, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite have trouble dealing with the facts, I have here a pamphlet that has been . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well it has a whole lot to do with it. This is a pamphlet that has been circulated throughout the constituency of Regina North, where it says, Mr. Speaker, that Allan Blakeney and the NDP bought share in Ipsco but that the Devine government sold all those shares, and that's the reason for Ipsco being . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please.

#### **Sale of Prince Albert Pulp Company**

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the minister responsible for the Prince Albert Pulp Company. Since both the Crown Management Board and Weyerhaeuser Canada's parent company have given final approval to the memorandum of understanding announced in March with respect to the Prince Albert Pulp Company, when will the taxpayers of Saskatchewan see all the documents relating to this deal and to this expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars of public funds?

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — Mr. Speaker, the documents the member refers to, as it relates to the agreement being worked on between Weyerhaeuser Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan, those documents are being worked on and in fact being finalized. And there will be information forthcoming once those documents and once the final agreement is in place.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Since final approval has been given by both the company and

the government, can the minister assure the Saskatchewan taxpayers that all contracts or agreements related to this sale will be presented to this Assembly as soon as possible?

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — What I say, Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated to you and to the House just a moment ago, is that the documents are being worked on; the legal documents are being prepared now for the agreement which will be put in place in the very near future.

I find it very interesting, however, Mr. Speaker, that the members of the NDP opposition on one hand, and just last week and the week before that, are against the project and saying that the project will never go forward — and this is what their position was as short a time ago as one week ago — and now are saying they see that the project is going ahead, and where will the documents be?

I give the House the assurance, Mr. Speaker, that those documents are being worked on; the final agreements are being drafted, and those documents will be available when the time is right for them to be available.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, no one on this side is against economic activity. However, this government, and particularly this Premier, have made it a habit to jump first and think later.

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

**Mr. Thompson:** — When it comes to such deals such as the Pioneer Trust fiasco and the Peter Pocklington deals, the taxpayers of this province want to know exactly what your government has committed to that project. If this is such a great deal as you claim, why are you afraid to make the documents public?

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — The answer, Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to the member that the legal documents are now being prepared. This, Mr. Speaker, is the same member who said in this House that the Weyerhaeuser Canada deal to build a paper-mill in Prince Albert for the good of the forest industry across northern Saskatchewan, that announcement was a black day in Saskatchewan, if I recall his words properly. That member said, it's a black day in Saskatchewan when the paper-mill was announced, and now he stands in this House, because he's visited the North and he's visited the people who are involved in the forest industry who all say that it's a great day for Saskatchewan when that was announced, he's now changing his position, as are all of his colleagues across there, and now they're saying it's a good project. Well I'm glad to see them onside.

As I've said to you, Mr. Speaker, and as I've said to this House, when those legal documents are prepared, those documents will be available, and they'll be available at the proper time.

#### **Loans Made By Sedco**

**Mr. Engel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government in its arrogance feels they can keep and give the answers

later; well, we want them now.

My question is to the minister responsible for Sedco, and it deals with Sedco's arrangements with Alberta millionaire Peter Pocklington. Has the Government of Saskatchewan signed contracts or agreements with respect to the commitments announced late last fall? And since those commitments deal with the expenditure of millions and millions of dollars of Saskatchewan's taxpayers' money — not your money, Saskatchewan's money — when will all these detailed documents be tabled in this legislature?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, that same member asked this question about a month ago in this House, exactly the same question. At that point in time, Mr. Speaker, I indicated that Sedco has a policy, and a proper policy, that we do not make public every loan that Sedco makes. Now Sedco could make a loan to some person in your constituency. Should that be public, should that be public? Because there's thousands of loans that Sedco has made over the years, are we to determine that every one of those loans, Mr. Speaker, should be made public so that the members opposite can review them; can twist the facts, Mr. Speaker; can slander a person in business that seeks to have financing arrangements through Sedco? That is shameful, Mr. Speaker. That is something that was not done by their administration; it's something that's not done by this administration or any other administration across the country that has a Sedco or a similar type government financial institution.

We indicated to the press and to the public the nature of the Pocklington deal, through the normal channels, that Sedco advanced X number of dollars. We should not have to go through those details, because to go through those details, Mr. Speaker, means that every small business that borrowed from Sedco, if the member opposite does not happen to like their politics, will want to have that loan made public.

The next thing he will do is every loan through the ag credit corporation should be made public. What kind of security has he got? Mr. Speaker, those things have always been treated as confidential in governments over the last 25 and 30 years and should continue to be treated so.

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Birth Announcement

**Mr. Speaker:** — Before orders of the day, I'd like to make one announcement to the House. Our Deputy Clerk, Gwenn Ronyk, has been away on leave for a little while. And I just want to announce to the House that she has a new son, the name of Keith Alexander, born on Friday.

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

### National Multiple Sclerosis Week

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the

day, I rise to draw awareness to this week of May 4th to 11th as National Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week.

As you well know, Mr. Speaker, the carnation is the floral emblem for the multiple sclerosis society, and they've been provided to all members of the Chamber, and I see they're wearing them today to help draw awareness with the society to the people of Saskatchewan of the recognition of this disease so they can learn more about this most commoncrippler of young adults.

Mr. Chairman, as the Minister of Health in this province, on behalf of the government, I would like to commend the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, the Saskatchewan branch, for their activities in bringing about more public awareness of this very crippling disease, public education, and of course the long-range goal which we hope we can all achieve some day, and that would be a cure for this disease. So with that, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the members on this side of the House, I would like to congratulate the society on the very good work they are providing.

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. The minister's statement was not a claim that the government had particularly done anything. He was congratulating a society. We join with the minister in those congratulations, wish them all the best in this week.

We all hope that multiple sclerosis is a disease which we soon conquer. I've had, in some ways, the honour of having an opponent one time who had this disease. He ran against me, did so very bravely, and I came to understand something about the disease. It is a very difficult disease. So we all wish the society the very best.

I'm going to entirely refrain from making any partisan comments about the inadequacy of this government's funding of health research, Mr. Minister, because I don't want to bespeckle this with a partisan comment. So I'll leave it at that and again congratulate the MS society.

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

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 31 — An Act respecting the Provision of Home Care Services

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Home Care Act. This is a very forward-looking piece of legislation that reflects a growing role and importance of home care in our health care system.

At the present time, Mr. Speaker, there is no explicit legislative base for the operation and funding of home care services in this province. The need for such legislation has become increasingly apparent for a number of reasons. For one thing, clear legislative authority for the program is needed to ensure continued cost sharing by the federal government under the Canada

assistance plan. The federal contributions amount to over \$5 million a year. The Provincial Auditor has also expressed concern about the lack of an adequate basis for government funding of home care. But, Mr. Speaker, the most important reasons relate to the program itself.

Home care has the potential to play a much broader and more substantial role in our health care system in the years ahead. A clear basis is therefore needed to allow appropriate and orderly program development. As well, the 45 home care districts in the province are run by autonomous local boards. It is therefore important to clearly define the relationship between these boards as the service providers, and the provincial government as the funding agency.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to outline the main provisions of the Bill. Sections 2 and 3 provide a definition of home care services and the purposes for which these services may be offered.

Sections 4 and 5 provide for the establishments of home care districts.

Section 6 provides authority for agreements between the government and the home care boards, and sets out various terms and conditions that may be attached to these agreements.

Sections 7 and 8 set out the powers and responsibilities of home care district corporations.

The Bill also provides for the making of grants to boards and other individuals and for various routine matters. That is the overall framework of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, but I would like to highlight a few significant features.

First, the definition of home care services goes well beyond the original four basic services of nursing, home-making, meals and home maintenance. In particular, the Bill emphasizes the role of volunteers and places a responsibility on local boards to promote volunteer services within their district.

As well, the Bill emphasizes the need for boards to co-ordinate their services effectively with other health care services in the community through mechanism such as the district co-ordinating committees.

And third, Mr. Speaker, the Bill provides a basis for home care to play a greater role in providing services such as respite care and services to individuals with a high level of care needs.

Mr. Speaker, last fall I released a public discussion paper entitled "Home Care — Future Directions." That document has received a broad and very positive response, and it has served in many ways as the basis for this legislation.

In short, Mr. Speaker, the Bill reflects a new face for home care and provides a solid foundation for the effective development of home care services in our province in the years ahead.

I am therefore very pleased to move second reading of Bill

31, An Act respecting the Provision of Home Care Services.

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. My comments are going to be relatively brief, and then I'm going to move a motion of adjournment on this Bill. My colleague, our critic, the member from Shaunavon, is unavoidably absent today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, as I may not get back into the debate on this Bill, I want to make some personal comments. One is that I gather this is a legislative framework for the home care system. In and by itself, there's perhaps nothing wrong with the Bill. The program no doubt needs a legislative framework.

The problem we have with home care relates to the funding of it. One of the reasons why the minister has such severe problems that he does with the hospitals is that the hospitals, in many ways, are being used as nursing homes, and one of the solutions to that is a much better system of home care.

If we had an adequate home care program, Mr. Speaker, we would be able to keep a goodly number of people in their homes rather than in hospitals or nursing homes, and I think that's something we all want to achieve. People are healthier, both mentally and physically, if they're at home, and we would be able to solve, at an affordable cost, part of our problem with respect to hospitals.

In talking to various groups around the province connected with health care, whether it be nurses, doctors, the administrators, everyone agrees that (a) we need more nursing homes to assist those senior citizens whose degeneration is fairly severe, but for those who aren't as that bad off, we need more and better home care. And it's an affordable way to solve an equally serious problem, and that is, our problem with the hospitals. So I want to make those comments to the minister.

And at this point in time I want to adjourn the debate to give my colleague from Shaunavon an opportunity to make some comments on it, Mr. Speaker. So I move this debate to be adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

### **Bill No. 35 — An Act to amend The Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1983**

**Hon. Mr. Dutchak:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to move second reading of The Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 1986.

The purpose of the reciprocal enforcement of maintenance orders Acts across Canada is to provide mechanisms for enforcing maintenance order made in other jurisdictions. This legislation applies when one of the parties to the order, either the party to be benefited by the order or the person requested to pay maintenance, is in Saskatchewan, and the other party is in another province or state.

The Act has now been in force for over two years, and certain minor problems have been identified in some of the procedural sections. In some cases a practice has developed with respect to processing of reciprocal maintenance orders which is better than the practice described in the Act. This necessitates changing the legislation so it's consistent with the practice that's developed.

Other changes are required to accommodate the role of the maintenance enforcement office established under The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, which was proclaimed in force on March 1, 1986.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1983.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I think we can indicate to the minister that we are essentially in agreement with the provisions and the amendments of The Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act.

I want, however, to take a look at it. We are having a review of the implications of the amendments. I haven't got that back as yet, a legal analysis of it, and therefore at this time I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 36 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act**

**Hon. Mr. Dutchak:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Consequential Amendment Act, 1986. These amendments are required to improve the effectiveness of the Act which came into force on March 1, 1986, and which involves changes to a number of Saskatchewan statutes to make them consistent with The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act.

The objective of these amendments is to clarify existing provisions to ensure that the intended effect is achieved, plus a change being made to The Pension Benefits Act, because it is not clear from reading the present section whether payments into, as well as payment out of, a pension plan can be garnisheed for the purposes of payment of a maintenance order. It is intended to attach only payments out. Thus, this section is being amended to achieve the desired effect.

(1445)

In addition, the consequential amendment to The Labour Standards Act is necessary to protect an employee from being fired as a result of garnisheed proceedings in the course of enforcing a maintenance order. Such protection has existed prior to this legislation, and it should be continued.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting

from the enactment of The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I want to take a look at the minister's comments, and to take a look at the impact of the amendments. And accordingly, I beg leave to adjourn the debate at this time.

Debate adjourned.

**ADJOURNED DEBATES**

**SECOND READINGS**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Dutchak that Bill No. 6 — An Act respecting the Application to Saskatchewan of the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction be now read a second time.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I made a few comments the last day, and I only want to add a few other comments in respect to Bill 6, and that is to say that, as we said before, the objects of the legislation and the objects of the convention, certainly we agree with, because in article 1 it indicates that the objects of the present conventions are to secure prompt return of children wrongfully removed or retained in any contracting state, and to ensure the rights of custody and access under the law of one of the contracting state are effectively respecting in other contracting states. Those are the basic premises or the basic objects of the convention which are being adopted in the legislation.

As I say, we are in agreement with it. I also . . . as the minister has indicated, there are some exceptions to it put out in article 13, which I think make eminent sense. And accordingly, we will be supporting this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morin that Bill No. 27 — An Act respecting the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Saskatchewan and to repeal The Chartered Accountants Act and The Certified Public Accountants Act be now read a second time.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to make just a few comments. I note that when the minister introduced this Bill, The Chartered Accountants Act, Bill No. 27, that he did not indicate to what extent he had reviewed the Bill with the chartered accountants association; and certainly, as the Assembly will know, that very extensive hearings were held by the Regulations Committee of which I chaired about a year ago. We reviewed the proposed Bill set forth by the government at that time.

There were a large number of recommendations that were made, and I would have thought that the minister would have, in more detail, outlined to what extent the amendments that were recommended by the Regulations Committee had been adopted within the legislation, and also, in putting forward the Bill here, whether, in fact,

proper amount of input has been received from the chartered accountants.

If he took time to look at the review, there were certainly some independent chartered accountants who were somewhat sceptical of giving too large an amount of power to the association. Certainly I hope that those individual and private accountants that came forward and expressed their concern, that the minister will be able to indicate when we get into committee of the whole what extent he has communicated with the various groups that had input into the report that was brought forward by the Regulations Committee.

Basically, in principle, we feel we will in essence be supporting the legislation. We want to follow up our determination of what input the minister has had with the association, and accordingly we're prepared to allow it to move through second reading, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Since the minister is going to respond, I want to particularly emphasize what my colleague from Quill Lakes has said. We dealt with a name change last session when, in fairness, the member from the Battlefords was not the minister. We changed the name of the registered industrial accountants to the certified management accountants. I think — did so. And I had expressed to me, Mr. Minister, a good deal of dissatisfaction from the certified general accountants, some of whom at least felt, Mr. Minister, that the RIAs (registered industrial accountants) were trying to trade on their name by adopting a very similar name as the CMAs (certified management accountants). So I hope you do deal with it in detail. I would think nothing less, Mr. Minister, than sending them a copy of the Act, giving them a reasonable period of time to respond, would suffice in these circumstances.

The field of accountancy is a very complex one. Unlike other groups — doctors, lawyers, engineers — the accountants are different. There are a number of groups who are competitive, both for the same work and, in some ways, for the same legislative powers.

So I hope, Mr. Minister, you'll deal with that in detail because unless I'm assured that you have fully and adequately consulted with all the other groups, of which there must be half a dozen at least, I'm going to be very sceptical about this Bill. So we do ask, Mr. Minister, that you deal with it in detail. If you can table the covering letters when you've sent that to the other groups, that would be so much the better.

I fully expect I'm going to get some calls on this once we pass it. That's been my experience with all the other times we've dealt with this. So I do ask, Mr. Minister, you to deal with the question in detail.

**Hon. Mr. Morin:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just briefly to close the debate, I'll be happy to deal with any of the questions that the members raise, in detail in committee. But generally speaking, we did have discussion with the CAs. And the member from Quill Lakes indicated that there was a Regulations Committee that looked at it. That committee raised a number of concerns — in the area of 20, I believe. They've all been

addressed by the chartered accountants group. I believe that that committee had some valuable input on the original Bill.

Essentially the chartered accountants surveyed their members; 86 per cent, I believe, were in favour of the changes as proposed. Since then the work that we've done with them, it's my understanding that they're virtually in unanimous agreement with them. And we anticipate . . . There were a couple of firms from which the areas of concern came in particular, and we have had both the chartered accountants association and our own staff deal with them in order to make sure that all concerns were allayed, and people were going to be very satisfied with the Bill.

So with those brief comments, I would close debate and look forward to the discussion in committee.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Motion for Interim Supply

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** —

Resolved, that a sum not exceeding \$584,619,920 be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** —

Resolved, that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987, the sum of \$584,619,920 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Mr. Chairman, I move:

Resolved, that a sum not exceeding \$143,831,160 be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

(1500)

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Mr. Chairman, I move:

Resolved, that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987, the sum of \$143,831,160 be granted out of the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Mr. Chairman, I move:



Resolved, that a sum not exceeding \$156,920 be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Mr. Chairman, I move:

Resolved, that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987, the sum of \$156,920 be granted out of the Special Projects Fund.

Motion agreed to.

The committee reported progress.

## FIRST AND SECOND READING OF RESOLUTIONS

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I move the resolutions be now read the first time.

Motion agreed to and resolutions read a first time.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — By leave of the Assembly, I move that the resolutions be now read a second time and agreed to.

By leave of the Assembly, the said resolutions were read a second time and agreed to.

## APPROPRIATION BILL

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — By leave of the Assembly, I move:

That Bill No. 37, An Act for the Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1987, be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a first time.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — By leave of the Assembly, I move that the Bill be now read a second and third time.

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

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Tourism and Small Business Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 45

#### Item 1 (continued)

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, as you will remember when we recessed that Thursday night, we had been listening to a rather lengthy presentation by the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg in which he raised a number of items that I think need some response. I won't attempt to respond to all of them at this time, but I think there are some that really need to be commented very briefly on.

One of the things that the member raised had to do with

business bankruptcies and some argument that in fact Saskatchewan was not doing very well. I should give him some statistics that are in fact the true statistics. I'm not sure what his source was.

In Saskatchewan '85 over 1984 there has been a 2.3 per cent decrease — and I repeat the word decrease — in the number of business bankruptcies. That is less than 1 per cent of the businesses in the province, and that is one of the absolutely lowest rates in Canada today. And I would point out that in neighbouring Manitoba there was a 52 per cent increase in bankruptcies in January 1986 compared to February '85. So there seems to be some very real inconsistencies in the numbers that the member opposite was using, and I would simply point out that in fact, year over year, there has been a decrease in bankruptcies in Saskatchewan and that in fact less than 1 per cent of Saskatchewan businesses fall prey to that rather unfortunate situation.

A couple of other general comments. The member made reference to grants. One of the very clear messages that my colleague, the member from Regina North got, when this department was established, was that business people view grants oft-times as the finger of doom, if you will — that to start a business because there's a grant available really is not good rationale for going into business, and that business people are much more interested in accurate information.

And he made reference to the main street program, why it had ended. I could simply indicate that the NDP while in government, when the program was introduced, set the sunset date at which time that program would end. The program has been completed, and it might interest him to know that we have had absolutely no request to re-institute such a program.

I think the reason is because most communities and most business men in Saskatchewan realize that it was superfluous, very irrelevant, and not a program that was of much benefit. For instance, there was a \$500 limit per business, and I'm curious today what the member thinks you could accomplish with that. However, the message is that no one has indicated any interest in resuming that program, and I think that's indicative of the type of vast acceptance it had.

Another comment that simply has to be emphasized had to do with regional offices. The member opposite indicated that their administration set up what he rightfully referred to as regional offices. I want to emphasize that those are very, very different from today's business resource centres.

The business resource centres that we have in Saskatchewan are probably the first of their kind in North America, although they will be copied and are being copied. The old regional offices are usually located on an upper story of a government building. Their sole function was to assist grant applications. They had no business information; they had no consulting services; and for all intents and purposes they had no interaction with the business community.

The new business resource centres, with one exception

which we will be correcting very shortly, are main-street, store-front locations. They're one-stop shopping on all the programs that are available in government — and I emphasize these are not grant programs. They have a tremendously wide selection of useful business information, including some computerized information that makes it very accessible for business people. They have trained consultants in all of them, and they have a broad range of joint activities with business groups.

And I could go on commenting on some of the other things he said, and I'm sure we'll come back to them in time. He mentioned some statistics. I have a tremendous number of statistics, and we can get into these, but indicate just a couple: that employment has increased by 13,000 people, and the employment rate has fallen slightly in the small-business sector; restaurant receipts are up 3.9 per cent; retail sales are up, and so forth. But we can get into all those at a future time.

He did talk about some lumberyard that had closed in his constituency. I have here, Mr. Chairman, a few, and I emphasize the word "few," clippings from around the province — and I direct the attention to the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg to this — some clippings from around the province on new businesses that have been opened of late. And if the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg wishes, I could send these over and he could spend some time studying these. Clearly the gloom and doom attitude that he has been attempting to purvey is not shared by the business community of the province. And so, if this would help the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, I'm certainly prepared to share these with you, sir — a lot of business openings around the province that maybe can engender a little enthusiasm in some of your remarks as we go through this whole episode.

(1515)

Finally some information which was requested on the department. You requested the salary of the people who work in my office. You will realize, of course, that in my office I have responsibility for Tourism and Small Business, Supply and Services, Employment Development Agency, Science and Technology, and the potash corporation, so the people in my office are spread around those.

I'll give you the entire office complement so you can share it with your colleagues when we come to the estimates of the other groups . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I can't see that paper, so I'll pass this over and you can be clear. Tourism and Small Business are basically three people on staff, and I'll send this over.

As far as ministerial travel, again I'll send this. I have been on one trip as the Minister of Tourism and Small Business. I attended a federal-provincial economic development and small business conference in Banff, Alberta. I was accompanied, I'm not sure that's asked for, but my deputy minister accompanied me on that trip, and I also went to Edmonton on the way back on that. I can send that information over.

**An Hon. Member:** — Did you visit Peter Pocklington?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Yes, I did, in fact. It's on there. The other information you wanted . . . I also have a page with senior officials' travel which I'm prepared to share with you. I'm not sure you asked for that, but I'll send that along as well. We have . . . I'll send this over and he can study on those while . . .

Consulting contracts. There are a number of those here. We'll send those . . . And I think that was all that was asked for if I'm not mistaken. Oh, advertising and agency fees, and I believe those are here as well. So we'll send this across and you can detail it.

**Mr. Engel:** — I believe when we were talking about the salaries for your personal staff, and the other answer was the increase over last year, I was wondering if you would do an comparison, or do we have to look that up ourselves?

The other areas that I was asking for . . . and I think I'll review the information I got before I go through those. You mentioned that I was trying . . . I don't remember the words you used but you weren't too happy about when we discussed bankruptcies.

The stats I used was nicely put together in the *Leader-Post* and this is for '85, Mr. Minister, and the source is the federal Consumer and Corporate Affairs. And I would like to give you a list from 1972 to '81, the business bankruptcies in Saskatchewan. I added them up just while you were talking, and if you take an average of the years that are there, there's 83 bankruptcies a year, is what it averages out to. I could go through the numbers: in '72, there were 70; in '73, 51; '74, 51; '75, 38; and I could go through that list up to '81, of 167. And then along comes three years of your government: 280, 314, and 309, for an average of 307. Now if you think 307 is less than 83.4 — you know, for equal terms of office, taking an average into account . . . You try and explain that out on the campaign trail. I don't think we need to go into further arguments here.

But business activities are risky and frequently end in failure, according to Roger Sauve in this *Leader-Post* article . . . about Saskatchewan's, although they drop slightly from '83 to '84. and I don't have the numbers for '85. But I know that your record isn't good, Mr. Minister. Your record isn't good because if you take any indicators into account at all . . . Business failures is a reflection on what's happening in the economy. And the point I was making, Mr. Minister, you can talk about all the new openings you want. What would you indicate and what is your department . . . What do you basically feel is a reasonable and objective economic indicator? What is a good source to measure the business climate? What should we use as a thermometer to compare your administration to the former one?

You don't like the bankruptcy rates. You say that 307 a year average, since your term of office, is acceptable and is better than 83 a year average during our term of office. Now if that isn't a good economic indicator, what would you say is a better one? What do you think is a good economic indicator as to how do we measure how good things are in Saskatchewan? And let the good times roll, are some things I hear from your people and your

supporters, particularly in your party. What are these good times you're talking about? Who's experiencing them? Give us, I guess, a short breakdown as briefly as you can on what you feel are some objective economic indicators that would indicate that things are going great.

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, once again I would emphasize the statistics that I indicated before, that in fact bankruptcies are down 2.27 per cent, '85 over '84. I could point out, as far as positive indicators go, that the total new incorporations from 1982 to 1985 were 12,686, which is roughly 10.5 times the number of bankruptcies which the member opposite seems so intent on dwelling on. Studies show that the rate of business failure is not the primary determinant in economic development. What is critical is the rate of business formation, and again we are forming businesses at a tremendously high rate, in fact again one of the best. There are any number of statistics that I could use to indicate that, in fact, there are some very positive things happening. And I will take the time to go through a few of them.

Employment has increased in the small-business sector by 13,000, and the unemployment rate is actually down very slightly in that period, this '85 versus '84, year over year. Preliminary figures show an increase in retail trade of roughly 7.7 per cent. Restaurant receipts have increased 3.9 per cent. Investment in primary manufacturing, trade, finance, and services — that's investment in those areas for new construction, for machinery and equipment — has increased 5 per cent, 4.9, 5 per cent.

The number of Saskatchewan incorporations has increased by 3.9 per cent, and the number is 1,114. I could go through the tourism sector, but I'm sure you'll want to deal with that separately. We could compare again the '82 period to '85, the number of Saskatchewan non-agricultural, self-employed entrepreneurs has increased by 3,900 — an increase of 14.4 per cent from '82 to '85. And I think there are any number of statistics that we can discuss which indicate that, in fact, the attitude in the small-business sector is very positive and certainly very different the attitude you would like to portray.

However, I'll go back to this sheet, rather than a statistic, an attitudinal change. Here we have a number . . . a few of the many, many businesses that have started in Saskatchewan have held openings. And I will send this over to the member because I think he should take the time to read through some of these. As I indicated, only a few from our clipping service of the many small businesses that have started.

And I think it's that spirit that exists amongst the entrepreneurs of this province, the small-business men who are prepared to invest their money, who believe in this province, who are prepared to create jobs that will be of great benefit to us, and possibly if the member took the time to peruse some of these, he might get a better feel for what is actually happening there. So, Miss, if you would take these across.

**Mr. Engel:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I think the true

measure of success in your department would reflect on what the people of Saskatchewan are doing, and how many people are working. Now you suggested there's a few more entrepreneurs; that's great. But how come the annual average unemployment in 1981 was 21,000, if you take the whole year into account, and the annual average in 1985 was 40,000 — twice as many people looking for work? What's your rationale for that? How do you explain that since your government took office that unemployment in Saskatchewan has doubled — literally doubled? And I can tell you that a big part of that and the main reason . . . And we could go on to cover off the areas like some of my colleagues are going to talk about and the people that . . . employables on the unemployment line.

But let's just take central mortgage and housing stats for housing starts. In 1984, Newfoundland had a 4.9 per cent increase; P.E.I. had a 22 per cent increase; Nova Scotia had a 50 per cent increase; New Brunswick, 44 per cent increase; Quebec, 14 per cent; Ontario, 34 per cent; Manitoba, 23 per cent; Alberta, 14 per cent; B.C., 11 per cent. Where was Saskatchewan? Where was Saskatchewan in housing starts in the change between '84 and '85?

And I expect that the member from Moosomin will be very silent on this one because Saskatchewan rated 10th — behind Newfoundland, Mr. Member, behind Newfoundland. How come you discouraged housing starts so badly that Saskatchewan would only have a 2.5 per cent change from '84 to '85?

Fifty-three hundred and fifty-four housing starts is all Saskatchewan could muster. Manitoba had 6,500 from 5,300 the year before. Ontario went from 48,000 to 64,000; Quebec from 41,000 to 48,000. Everywhere else, Canadians were building new houses; they were enthused about the jobs; they had the employment opportunities. But the people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman, that should have been building a new house — where were they? They're on unemployment, thanks to your government's policies. They were drawing unemployment. They weren't building houses. They weren't working.

And I think that's a reflection on the small-business attitudes of this government. Great for Peter Pocklington. Great! Give him a \$10 million grant. Don't give us the numbers in the House. Sign a deal with Weyerhaeuser but don't tell the public of Saskatchewan the sweetheart deals you make with him. But when it comes to people working, the numbers are there. The 40,000 are unemployed, and I think that's the economic indicator that Saskatchewan people are talking about. That's the housing start.

Look at a graph. It shows it nicely. And you go from Nova Scotia right down the line to Saskatchewan, and you only see a 2 per cent increase when you had a 50 per cent increase, even, in Nova Scotia. And in P.E.I., where they were sitting at 22 per cent . . . And you know, their government was turfed out, even at 22 per cent. Just imagine what's going to happen at 2.5 per cent. You know, a tenth of what P.E.I. did, Saskatchewan was able to muster.

I think it's a poor performance record when you look at the stats, any way you want to measure it. You're not doing it. The people just haven't got the opportunity, and if you have any indicators that would indicate that the people are happy about this kind of performance . . . And these are records from the central mortgage and housing states for the year '85 over '84. And I think that's bad news. And I'd like you to comment on just what's your solution. What's your solution to these 40,000 people that would love to work . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . 47,000? Well, I was giving him the benefit of the doubt and only saying 40, but even at that, Mr. Minister, that indication indicates it's bad.

Saskatchewan . . . In a survey that was done — and I have this from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* — on the seventh month in 1985; according to a survey that was done amongst business men, "Tax burden worries small-business men the most." Instead of doing these guys a favour, instead of helping them, the top of the list was their total tax burden . . . 58.9 per cent responded saying that the tax burden was the thing that they worried — the most signified problems in small business — and I think that is a bad reflection on this government. You're taxing them right out of business.

(1530)

They go down the line and say government regulations and red tape and paper burden is 48 per cent; high interest rates are 44 per cent; business slower than normal is 43 per cent; unfair practice by big suppliers and competitors, 24 per cent; shortage of qualified labour is going down to 15 per cent; availability of financing, 12 per cent; high wages rates 11 per cent; inflation, 11 per cent and others only 4 per cent.

So if you look at that, 60 per cent of the people are worried about the tax burden that you've foisted on them. The largest tax increases in Saskatchewan's history were foisted on small business by people that say they stand up for the business man, people that say you stand up for the business man. When you add the flat tax and the tax increases, the paper load that you put on them, the extra taxes because they have to pay their property improvement grants — those kinds of things are bothering people. And that's why they're saying to you, Mr. Minister, when are you going to call the election?

I think the economic indicators we're talking about indicate loud and clear that you're on the wrong track. You haven't tuned in to what business men are saying. I think it's evident that you haven't had experience in the field. You should be listening to your staff and listening to people that know what's going on and start looking at and putting a little salve on where people and business men are hurting, rather than making it more painful for them.

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, obviously there are a number of points there. Maybe I can try to work backwards.

I think as he was finishing he was talking about the election call and being in touch with small-business people. I can tell the member opposite that small-business people are telling us, yes, call it because

you'll have no problem; you will be successful, and we can carry on with what is already started, and in which we are very satisfied.

He asked as well, I believe, about the tax burden, which was indicated. I believe that if you break that down there are various components to any tax burden, and I don't think that inference was to provincial taxes for the most part. However, the question I think I got out of that was: what has been done for small business in Saskatchewan in terms of the tax load? And I will name a few of the things that have been done, and maybe he can take some notes and he would understand.

This government has taken steps, first of all, to reduce the tax burden through targeted measures, including the initial venture capital program and the recent expansions of it which we discussed very briefly in this House. There is the elimination of the small-business manufacturing and processing deduction; the elimination of sales tax on research equipment; the elimination of provincial income tax for new businesses recently announced by my colleague, which, I think, has been very well received; and the provincial sales tax change relating to clothing and footwear.

And I think all of those things indicate attempts, very serious, very realistic attempts to help the small business sector continue to do the tremendous job they have done in this province in terms of developing businesses and creating jobs.

Now there was some long discussion about housing starts. A couple of numbers that might be of interest in terms of total urban dwelling starts by provinces; in Saskatchewan, '85 over '84, we had a 19 per cent increase in housing starts — urban dwellings — a 19 per cent increase.

Looking down the list, I compare that to neighbouring Manitoba, where they had only a 15 per cent increase; Alberta had a 16 per cent increase; British Columbia, 17 per cent increase. As a matter of fact, Saskatchewan had the highest rate of increases of urban dwelling starts in western Canada. So possibly the member would like to consider those numbers.

I believe the other portion of his . . . the first thing he talked about was the unemployment rate, asked why . . . In fact, I would point out that in 1981 the labour force in Saskatchewan was 446,000 people; in 1985 the labour force was 491,000. I think a little quick mathematics will show roughly a 45,000 increase in the labour force in the province, and that is the primary reason.

We have created jobs at a rate unparalleled by any other province in Canada. And in the last year, despite the problems that everyone understands with drought, significant problems to the agricultural sector, we had a year-to-year increase of 17,000 jobs. And 13,000 of those 17,000, roughly speaking, are in the sector that we're discussing here in these estimates, the small business sector. So I think it's safe to say that the small business

community does not share the doom-and-gloom attitude of the members opposite.

In terms of building starts, in Saskatoon, I know 1986 will be a record year in terms of commercial industrial building permits and, in fact, I indicated the 19 per cent increase in urban housing starts last year, over the previous year, which was the highest in western Canada. In fact this year it's estimated that housing starts in Saskatoon, which is the municipality I'm most familiar with, will in fact double over last year, so we'll be looking at a significant increase in that area. So I think it's safe to say that things have gone well.

It bothers me a little bit to have the members of the party opposite stand in this House and talk about people's homes when, in 1982 when people were suffering under 20 per cent interest rates, their party, then in government said, sorry folks, there is literally nothing we can do; to suggest interest rate relief is totally irresponsible. The people of the province indicated what they thought about that attitude at that time, and I don't think that that attitude has changed significantly. They expect their government to provide them protection in those types of times, and I think they appreciated it.

Mr. Chairman, I would indicate that in terms of the numbers I've indicated, once we get this next election out of the way, there really is so much more we can do in this province.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I want to go into this wonderful economic climate that you have here in Saskatchewan, and I want you to expound on it a little more so the people of Saskatchewan can hear it. Because I'll tell you that every indicator that there is does not indicate that things are booming in Saskatchewan.

And I'd like to ask you this, Mr. Minister: my colleague has asked you for some of the indicators which you would put forward as having a strong economy in Saskatchewan. And I ask you, in respect of retail sales I ask the minister whether you think retail sales is an indicator of fairly strong, active economic conditions. And I ask you, during the past year, if you could indicate how the retail sales ranked in Saskatchewan vis-à-vis the other provinces in Canada.

So let's deal with that one indicator, the retail sales. And I ask you, first, whether you believe that retail sales is a fairly good indicator of economic activity; two, I ask you to indicate where Saskatchewan stood vis-à-vis other provinces of Canada in terms of the percentage increase in retail sales; and thirdly, I ask you what is your projections for the current year?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, very quickly, in 1985 over '84, which of course are the most recent statistics, Saskatchewan's retail sales increased 7.8 per cent. While I don't have province-by-province numbers, the Canadian increase, the national increase, was 10.6 per cent.

I think it's safe to say, Mr. Chairman, that in Saskatchewan the effects of the problems in the agricultural sector,

effects which I think have been felt in all communities across the province, were greater than in other provinces. Certainly the drought impact in Saskatchewan was greater than either of our neighbouring provinces east or west. Obviously it has a much larger effect than it would in British Columbia, for example, or in eastern or maritime Canada.

So with the Canadian average being 10.6 per cent increase, retail sales '85 over '84, our average being almost 8 per cent, I would suggest that, well, things have been very difficult agriculturally. And we have had considerable debate in this legislature based on the fact that things have been difficult. We have talked about various governments' efforts to help them. I think that the rural folks understand that this government has certainly been working, and announcements last week would indicate the federal government, as well, has come to their aid. The fact that we have an increase of almost 8 per cent speaks very well for retail sales and the optimism that exists in this province.

**Mr. Koskie:** — We've gone through one of the indicators, and as you have confirmed, Mr. Minister, rather than speak in generalities of saying that everything is wonderful here for the small business community, you have confirmed what we have been saying is that, in fact, the economy has not been operating in high gear.

As you indicated the retail sales increased only by 7.8 per cent here, '85 over '84, and in Canada it was 10.6 per cent as you indicated. We had the lowest increase in retail sales last year of every other province in Canada other than Prince Edward Island. That's how active it was for the business community under the economic conditions which you say are so good that all you need to do, in your arrogance, as you said, is to let us get on and call another election and we'll continue on. Well I'll tell you, the business community that we're talking to are not very enticed with the economic performance of this government.

Let's take a look at another indicator and see whether or not people of Saskatchewan are doing pretty well. And let's take a look at some of the provincial government and management of the economy, and let's take the consolidated fund. Would you agree, Mr. Minister, that during the four years of your operation that not only have you created a deficit, the largest in the history of this province, accumulated history of the province, a deficit in excess of \$2 billion, that's what you have created for the business community and the taxpayers of this province.

Do you realize, Mr. Minister, that under the stewardship of your government opposite, that in four years that the accumulated annual interest alone is \$200 million annually, just to pay the interest on the debt that you people have accumulated, and let it not be disguised.

When we go across the province, people are saying, when the Tories and the government offer new programs . . . Do you know what the public are saying, Mr. Chairman? They're saying, so what. So what; they're promising more. They aren't paying for it. They haven't put their financial affairs into shape, so they're not paying

for it; so they promise a new program, try to buy votes.

(1545)

But you know what the people of Saskatchewan who own business and own farms and are successful . . . Do you know what is happening, Mr. Chairman? There's a mortgage being placed by this government on the property of the successful people in this province by a \$2 billion debt. And these birds across the way are saying, what a wonderful time we've been having in the last four years, business men.

And every one of us . . . And if you take a look at the total debt of the province, Saskatchewan's debt nears \$9 billion mark — \$9 billion in debt — \$8,500 for every man, woman, and child. That's what you have here in Saskatchewan — \$9 billion mark. Do you know what it was when the Tories took office, when this government opposite took office? The total accumulated debt in this province was \$3.4 billion, and the Consolidated Fund had been balanced for 11 successive years. That's what was the record of the previous government.

And this guy, this minister stands here and he says to the business community, everything is wonderful. We're having a great party. Do you know what we're doing? We're throwing a party for the voters for the next election. But he doesn't tell them that he has their credit card, and he's charging up this little party that the Tories are putting on, promising to the voters, that he's charging it up to the business men and the farmers and the successful people across this province.

And what is more, Mr. Chairman, do you know what he's doing? He is mortgaging the future of our children. Because with a \$9 billion debt, just think of what the next generation is faced with. Do you think that they will have the opportunity for innovative programs? Of course not. Do you know what the next election, if these people get in for another four years, will be? Elect us now that we can get rid of the debt that we created. That'll be the next campaign.

And what I'm saying, Mr. Minister, and I want to ask you: do you think that an economy that is operating at a very high level, as you have been indicating, would indeed have increased the debt, gross debt, from 3.4 billion to almost 9 billion; that would, in fact, have four, five, successive deficits — \$2 billion in the Consolidated Fund alone? That's what you've had — \$200 million of interest alone. And you say that you have an environment which is stimulating the small business and that they're really booming.

Well the business people of this province are not fooled. Do you know what they've said? They said, we've got to get rid of this government. They don't know what they're doing. They're the worst managers in the whole of the Canada. We have never seen a government who so mismanages the affairs of this province as is evidenced by the party across the way. And they're saying, we're not socialists, we're not members of your party, but I'll tell you, call an election and we'll get rid of them so we get some management. And that's the problem, Mr. Minister.

And so I ask you, first of all, retail sales, the worst in the country. I ask you, a rising debt, the magnitude which . . . The minister shouldn't smile at the magnitude of that debt — \$9 billion placed on the backs of Saskatchewan people; \$2 billion in the Consolidated Fund. And they're going around now and they're saying, let us make some more promises because, you know, these people out there are foolish. They don't pay attention to deficits and not balancing budgets. We can fool them. We'll go and promise some more initiatives and then we'll try to get elected. Well I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan are aware of what's happening.

And I want to ask you then, Mr. Minister: how can you say that the economy of this province is operating in high gear if, in fact, you've had such mismanagement of the Consolidated Fund, \$2 billion deficit; that you've had massive debts in respect to the total debt of the province; that indeed you have sold off many of the assets that the people of Saskatchewan owned?

You sold off a coal mine, Mr. Minister, and you've blown the money. You've sold off mining equipment, and you've blown the money. You've sold off the highway equipment; you have blown the money. You have taken retained earnings from the potash corporation, and you've blown the money. You've created a dividend at a time when there was a deficit. That's what you've done. And I'll tell you, this economy is not booming, Mr. Minister.

I ask you, Mr. Minister: stand up and tell me why such a dismal management of this province's financial affairs if indeed, as you say, it's booming for the business community.

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, a couple of comments, first of all on the retail sales which I believe, if I can remember correctly after all of that, was where he started that discourse.

It's important to note that while retail sales have increased 7.8 per cent in Saskatchewan, and nationally it's about 10.8 per cent, to put that in perspective you have to include the inflation rate within that. In fact, in Saskatchewan the inflation rate has been in the area of 3.5 per cent, and when that is considered and the whole story is taken into consideration, it's clear that Saskatchewan, despite very difficult times, has done very well.

Just a couple of comments. I couldn't begin to respond to all of that . . . whatever. First point, the Minister of Finance, very clearly in the budget speech which initiated this estimates discussion, pointed out what most of the people in Saskatchewan already knew; that in fact it was the activities of the '70s that led to the deficit of the '80s. And had the government of the day simply taken the money that they spent to purchase the potash mines, put it in Co-op Trust, we would have a surplus today.

Not only that, that purchase, that money was then taken to New Brunswick and mines were opened to run in competition. It was, as many people have indicated, one of the blackest days in this province's history, and certainly something that no thinking people are prepared to accept.

However, further to the deficit, and I think this is really the important part in what we have just heard, the Premier of this province indicated very clearly that he was prepared to open the treasury — I believe was his term — to support the agricultural sector in this province. And I think that the actions that have been taken have indicated very clearly that he did that.

I think, Mr. Chairman, when you look at the deficit numbers and follow through the drought problems that we have faced, it's very evident where that came from. I think that the member opposite, today in this House, has very clearly said to every farmer in Saskatchewan, if we ever become government again, you can forget the kind of support that farmers have experienced of late under this administration.

And I would say as well, Mr. Chairman, that small-business people, business people in this province, know how important the continuing agricultural sector is and, in fact, support the efforts of this government to try to keep that agricultural sector healthy and alive and, in fact, operating. And when the member opposite talks about business people being against the moves that have been taken and he tries to play the business man against the farmer, I can assure him that the majority of the people in this province don't accept that line of argument, and will not.

I suppose only one other thought, Mr. Chairman. I find it strange that the member, who less than three weeks ago when he somehow got the idea that there was going to be an election and their party was prepared to offer more than a billion dollars of vote-getting program, can now stand in his place and say that these things are not important. It's the old NDP flip-flop, depending which side they can operate.

But I believe most business men — and I think we are doing small business estimates — understand very well how important it is to keep the agricultural sector alive in this province. I think they accept what has happened and understand the numbers that we're discussing, number one, flow from the NDP activities in the '70s and the resource sector; and number two, have resulted in the efforts of this government to keep the agricultural sector operative in this province.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well I hope the business community are listening with that defence because certainly it's evident, Mr. Minister, as we go around the province, that the mismanagement by your government is a major concern and will be, in fact, one of the major items in the next election.

We've dealt with retail sales, Mr. Minister, and you admit it, that that is an indicator as to how well we're doing in small business in the province. And you agreed that it's less, the retail increase in Saskatchewan was less than the average in Canada, so it was slower here in Saskatchewan. You also agreed that the mounting debt here is a fact of the lack of stimulation in the economy.

I'd like to ask you one other indicator. I wonder if the minister would agree that new investment in the

province's economy might be also another indicator as to whether or not there is, in fact, growth taking place. And I ask you whether, in real terms, there has been an increase in the new investment in the economy of Saskatchewan vis-à-vis a comparison of 1981, when it was \$5.1 billion, and in 1985 it was 4.2 billion.

So I ask you: would you agree, first of all, that in respect to the growth of the economy, that new investment would certainly be an indicator as to whether or not there is a very vibrant economy and active economic conditions? and what the statistics show, Mr. Minister, is that that new investment has not increased in Saskatchewan from 1981 — over 1981 figure in fact, in real terms. The investment in 1985 was lower.

So I ask you again then: would you agree that new investment is an indicator of economic activity? And if you had a small-business community that was as what you're purporting, then I would assume that there should be certainly new investment. And so I ask you: would you agree that that is an indicator? And secondly, can you confirm that in real terms there has not been any substantial increase in new investment during the past four years?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, once again I want to re-emphasize the reference to retail sales and tie the inflation number with it. When you consider the 8 per cent increase, or 7.8 per cent increase in retail sales and combine that with a 4 per cent inflation rate, I think that Saskatchewan's increase in retail sales year over year, despite what everyone in the province accepts as a very difficult situation in the agricultural sector, is in fact certainly competitive. It doesn't lead the country, but it's certainly competitive, and I think is a reasonable — let's use the term reasonable — indicator of activity in that area.

In terms of investment, there have been some changes in investment patterns, and I think those are important to note. Between 1982 and 1986, new private investment — I emphasize that term "private investment" — as a share of total new investment has increased from 63 per cent to over 66 per cent, with public investment declining from 37 to 33.8 per cent. This indicates that much of the new investment activity in Saskatchewan is being done by the private sector. And I think if there's a significant difference is what's happening in recent years in the investment sector in this province, it's in that relative involvement of the private and the public sector. In other words, private sector is becoming more involved; government is becoming less involved.

Total new investment from '84 to '85 grew by 5.2 per cent, and over three-quarters of this increase can be attributed to private investment growth, while the remaining one-quarter was public investment. So now the increase last year was 5 per cent — possibly, again, not a leader, but I think, reasonable. And the key element is that the increase has been taking place from the private sector with less government involvement.

And I really believe that that was a message that was clear in 1982, that the public of this province were saying to the people, to their government: we don't want as much.

(1600)

**Mr. Koskie:** — We've run through a couple of indicators here, and I think we have agreed here that retail sales last year was one of the poorest in the country, second last — only better than Prince Edward Island; that the accumulation of the debt indicates that government has either mismanaged, or do not have the revenues from the growth of the economy, and as a consequence you have a huge deficit.

And we deal with . . . so far as investment, the figures indicate that there has not been an increase in private and public investment in the province in real terms, 1985 over 1981.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, as Minister of Tourism and Small Business . . . I think also that there are other indicators that your performance in your portfolio to work with the small-business people clearly indicates other indicators that show that things could be a lot better.

And let's take a look at the youth employment. And do you realize that in youth, employment is down; that there are 7,000 fewer young people working in 1985 than in 1981. And unemployment among young people are about 18,000 — almost 16 per cent, Mr. Minister. I ask you: is that not an indicator as to how well small business is doing when, in fact, we find that 7,000 fewer jobs for young people in '81 over '85? That you find, in fact, that there's some 18,000 young people unemployed, at a rate of almost 16 per cent. I ask you, Mr. Minister: is that not an indicator of economic growth, and isn't it an indication that your policies in conjunction, working with the small business community, have failed?

And, in fact, is it not true, Mr. Minister, that when you assumed office your government adopted a policy of not working with the small business community of Saskatchewan, but rather an open for big business operation? That was the emphasis that you placed, and that was the conference that you held.

And so I ask you: would you agree that if the small business is booming under the direction of your government, or the assistance of your government, that we wouldn't have an increase in youth employment? Would you agree with that?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, we don't have a break-out of employment numbers by age categories. I think all of us on this side of the House have learned some time ago not to accept the numbers provided by the members opposite at face value, and I don't think we'll do that here. When we bring in the Employment Development Agency, we can get into that kind of detail on employment.

I think there are a couple of key things though that have to be remembered. First of all, it's important to remember that consistently over the last four years this province has led the nation in unemployment rate and in new job creation. I think our record is very clear on that. We have been the national leader in job creation. I think to try to then bridge to an argument that somehow youth employment in this province is out of control . . . Youth

employment is a national, in fact it's a continental, in fact it's an international problem, and it's one that is going to take a great deal of time and effort on the part of governments and one the part of everyone involved in it.

We have adopted several, and I mean, well, many programs, concepts, things to improve. We believe that the way to improve youth employment is to work very hard in the Department of Advanced Education as far as technical training, retraining programs. Get these young people who primarily are people who lack skills, who have left school early, get those people into some training programs that can be of benefit to them and can put them in a position to actually acquire meaningful work.

I think that while I certainly will not stand here and down play the problem that exists with youth employment, I will not accept that it is unique to the province of Saskatchewan. And I would suggest to you, and I'm sure you will accept, that many things have been attempted. I think of our summer programs, Opportunities '83-84-85, and of course now Opportunities '86; I think of the federal government's Challenge '86 — these programs last year the most successful in history in terms of applicants and money put out. I think we'll see that again this year — obviously responding to a very real need.

We look at our winter works program; same types of things. You can go through them, some programs my colleague, the Minister of Social Service — youth employment program, the YES program, I believe it's referred to — has brought in, attempting and, in fact, succeeding in dealing with some of the problems you indicate.

But I think it's very unfair to suggest that the problems of youth employment are an indicator that the provincial economy is somehow operating at a lower degree than other provinces. Because the youth employment problem is in fact an international problem and one that we are committed to working very hard to attempt to resolve.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I want to continue just a couple of other further indicators which I think clearly demonstrate that the direction of your government, Mr. Minister, was wrong at the start, and continues to be inadequate. I say that you started off with a great celebration here in Regina — open for big business — and that has been the direction of this government, is to work towards the assistance of outside multinational corporations at the expense of the small-business community.

And it's rather interesting, you know, because if you look and see and you ask how are the people of Saskatchewan, generally, not alone just the young people that are in dire straits under the policies of this government; but if you look from January '82 to January of '86, Mr. Minister, the able-bodied fully-employable care-load of the Saskatchewan assistance plan increased by 10,000 people.

In other words, the unemployed employable, there was about 4,500 of them in 1982. And do you know how many there are today, Mr. Minister? There's almost 15,000 unemployed employables. And you stand here and say that you and your economic activities have made



such great inroads here in Saskatchewan. Ten thousand more people, unemployed employables, on welfare. Do you realize, Mr. Minister, that the welfare cost to this province has increased a hundredfold, from about \$97 million when we were in office in 1981-82 to over \$206 million last year; that you have over 60,000 people on welfare? But more sad is the fact that many people who want to work, the unemployed employable, have increased drastically under the mismanagement of your government opposite, and the policies.

And I want to say, Mr. Minister, that I had some confidence when the previous minister, the member from Regina North, now attempting to be the member from Regina South — when he was the minister, at least he had some knowledge, and he worked within the field of small business. But what they have done now is to take and put someone who has absolutely no knowledge of the business community, as you admitted to my colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

But I ask you, Mr. Minister, how can you in fact say that your policies . . . And let's face it, small business is the economic generator in this province. It creates the majority of the jobs, always will, and in fact of the 30,000 in small business throughout this province, if you could get them to employ one and a half more people, each of them, you'd do away with your unemployment. But what you have done is gone around and look through . . . Your government has spent a great deal of time travelling the world, looking for the high rollers, and you spend your time bringing in the former campaigner for the leadership of the Tory party, Pocklington, from Edmonton. And you have neglected the business community, the base and the strength of this economy.

And so I ask you again, if indeed you think that your economic strategies are working so well, that small business which is the prime employer of people is going well, then I ask you: why have the number of unemployed employable increased from 4,500 to around 15,000? Can you explain that?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, obviously a number of points that need to be made. First of all the member opposite questions my qualifications to hold this portfolio. If in fact it required some business acumen on the part of the opposition to carry on these estimates, we could close the books and go home today because there's nobody over there capable of discussing business.

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

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — He talked about SAP (Saskatchewan assistance plan) recipients. We have been over the problems in the agricultural sector. We have been over the problems in your employment and how they impact internationally. We have talked about concerns of drought, and so on. And we have also talked about increases, substantial and significant increases, in the labour force. I would say to the member that probably the more significant statistic of all that is that, in fact, in terms of SAP (Saskatchewan assistance plan) recipients, social assistance recipients, today we have hundreds fewer on those benefits than we had a year ago. And I think it's the trend that is important, and we are

responding and we're seeing some positive differences.

He talked at some length about the open for business conference that was held in Saskatchewan in 1982, shortly after we came to government. I think it's important, Mr. Chairman, to point out why that conference was important. It's the fact that it had to take place that should be considered here.

Under the previous administration, business people, I would suggest the world over, looked at Saskatchewan askance — I'll use that term; they certainly did. There was no desire on the part of the private sector world-wide to make investment in this province. The experience of the potash industry in this province is one that scarred the opportunity of this province to acquire investment for years to come.

And in fact that conference was necessary to say to the world: the people of Saskatchewan have seen the problem; they have eliminated the problem, and Saskatchewan now wants to join the rest of the world in bringing in investment, in bringing in money and creating jobs, in having some excitement, and in making some things happen. And in fact that has happened, to date. And following the next election, when we are returned to office, we will see far more significant investment flowing into this province, and I think that's clearly safe to say.

The members somehow argue against the Gainers plant in North Battleford. I think it would be a great deal of interest, certainly a great deal of interest to this committee, and I think to the people of the province, if one of the members opposite would stand up and say what side of that issue their party is on this week. They have . . . Their leader has publicly said they will not continue the project. He's gone to North Battleford and said they definitely will continue the project. I wonder if there's anything on which they have a clear, concise statement. And I would invite a clear statement on that project. If, in fact, the party is against it, I would like to hear it. If, in fact, they are in favour of it, I would also be very interested in hearing that.

(1615)

Mr. Chairman, further to the point of investment dollars flowing into the province, it seems to be the position of the party opposite that money that comes in in investment from large corporations somehow doesn't benefit small business. I would point simply to the upgrader project that is here in Regina, that is currently under way. Contracts are being tendered, and these are being tendered in packages that will allow small Saskatchewan businesses to take part in that program.

And I don't think that the business men of Saskatchewan . . . I know that the members of the chambers of commerce that I have talked to do not believe that that project out there is something for big business, despite the fact it is the largest project undertaken in this province. It is a significant project that will impact greatly on many, many small businesses throughout the province. I think business men, small-business men, understand that and are appreciative of it.

The member talked about small business as if somehow they had been forgotten. In 1982, when we came . . . in fact, a year later, actually, when this department was formed . . . And I think the fact that we are here today doing estimates on the Department of Tourism and Small Business more than anything else indicates the emphasis that this government places on small businesses. There was no such department under the NDP. And I think that's an important factor to remember. There was no department of small business under the . . . no department of small business, Mr. Chairman.

And when my colleagues, I believe first of all the member from Meadow Lake and then more recently the member from Regina North, toured the province and talked to business men, talked to business men, they pointed out some of the problems that they had with the previous administration. They said they wanted several things. They said they'd like a stable business climate. And with the NDP in power, their finger was so deep in the economic bowl that there was no way to establish a stable business climate in the province. They made that very clear.

They said they wanted a reduction of red tape, that they were tired of the paper blizzard. The fact, Mr. Chairman, that to date — to date — we have eliminated over 16,000 useless, out of date, irrelevant regulations that were here under that government, indicates that we have taken some steps and we are continuing to take steps to reduce that paper burden that under their administration was so overbearing to small business.

The said as well — and this is a very telling comment — they told us clearly that they wanted an advocate within government. They did not see the department of industry and commerce, as the member has indicated, as small businesses' advocate. And the creation of this department whose estimates we are working on today indicates that this government did in fact respond.

They said as well that they wanted to be able to sell to government. Small-business men in Saskatchewan wanted to be able to sell to government. When you look at the Buy Saskatchewan programs that have been instituted in the Crown corporations, and I think Sask Power is probably the most pre-eminent example of that, where their percentage of purchases within the province has risen dramatically over the last three years; when you look at the government practices and policies that we've instituted, where we are going out of our way to make sure the benefits of government involvement in whatever, flow to Saskatchewan folks, it indicates that we have — and business men tell us that they see — very positive changes in the attempts or their opportunities to sell to government.

They indicated that they wanted government policies and programs that promoted small community economic development. And, Mr. Chairman, that is very, very important, the economic development of small communities. Under that previous administration, small communities were literally withering on the vine.

And when we looked . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I think we've hit a nerve this time, Mr. Speaker. When we

look at the venture capital program, the venture capital program which was targeted at small communities and allowed small communities to form venture capital corporations and to bring businesses to their main streets — obviously, a very important element.

When we look at the community development program where we go out and form volunteer committees within the community; we give them counselling and advice and training on how to attract businesses; and we look at almost 125 new businesses and services that have been attracted to Small Town Saskatchewan, by those committees — that's just by those committees — we see a tremendous improvement. And that is not to indicate that that is still not a crying need. Work by this department will continue.

We have talked in this Assembly during these estimates about the changes we're making in our business resource centres where we are going to purchase vans for the various centres, and those vans will on a regular basis tour the small centres in those communities and bring business information to those communities. And that is something that has never happened in this province. Until recently they never had the opportunity to get business advice. Now they will be able to get it in their own business sector, certainly in their own community. And that is a significant departure from the previous grant application assessment programs that existed. And I think that is something that's very positive.

I think lastly, and probably as important, business men that we met with in the '82-83 era indicated that the biggest problem they faced was uncertainty with interest rates. And I think the nine and five-eighths program — I'll use that term which is the common term for it; it will now become known as the 8 per cent program — which gives business men some security on what their interests rates will be on their operating moneys over a period of time, has probably been one of the most popular and most important programs to small business.

Small-business men told us exactly what home owners told us, that when they went to the previous government and indicated that interest rates were a problem, the hands went in the air and the answer was: we don't control interest rates; we can't help you; there's nothing we can do; sorry guys, it just won't work. Then they came to us and we built on the success of the residential mortgage program — the thirteen and a quarter program. When we introduced nine and five-eighths, as I indicated, we've had 6,000 businesses apply for that program and realize the benefits. Almost \$1 million have been paid out in benefits in that program. And with that program now being reduced to 8 per cent, with the automobile dealers and the farm implement dealers now being eligible, that program, I think — in terms of response, in terms of reacting to what we were told — indicates that this government does in fact respond to the needs of small business. And I think that clearly we were given some messages, clearly we have acted, and clearly those were messages that the previous administration had not listened to.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — I want to, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, make a few comments in respect to the remarks of the minister. And he indicates and he defended, if you could believe it, he defended their approach, their big-business approach of their government. And do you know what he said? He said we needed that approach of attracting big business and having those big conferences and spending taxpayers' money, because it really helped the small-business men.

Well let's take a look at what really has happened, because I don't think they've changed the attitude of people investing here, because private and public investment hasn't increased. And if you look at some of the enterprises that the government have been announcing on the verge of . . . on preparation of going into an election; first of all, you have an upgrader here in Regina which has been announced on three or four occasions . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Four times.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Four times. And I ask the minister: how much private money is in the upgrader? Six hundred and fifty million dollars in the upgrader, and it's all guaranteed by the taxpayers of the province or the taxpayers of Canada — \$650 million. There's not one single cent of private money going directly into the upgrader at the present time.

But what is more interesting still is that, you know, they try to run this province on press releases. And not only have they not started to build the upgrader, but they thought they were going to have an election in April, and so they announced a fertilizer plant which was going to be attached to this non-existent upgrader. And they said, we're going to have a fertilizer plant built on adjacent to this here non-existing upgrader.

Well the election didn't come. The had problems within the ranks and they couldn't call an election. And you know what happened now, from the announcement that the Premier made? Well the deadline has run out. By April 30th, they were going to have a decision as to whether or not there was going to be a memorandum of agreement signed to look into the feasibility of going ahead with the fertilizer plant. So now what have they done? They've extended the time.

So this is one of the things they're holding up and saying, oh we needed to be pro big business because we needed investment. Well private and public investment is down. One of the major economic development industries, the upgrader, is all public money. The fertilizer plant — they've forgotten about it, I guess. Then if you take a look at Gainers, well what they've done there is to guarantee about \$10 million of taxpayers' money to help out a candidate for the Tory leadership from Alberta. And what has happened here? It hasn't helped the small-business man because what he has done is gone to North Battleford . . . And what has he done? He's hired Alberta contractors. He's hiring Alberta business men to come in, using taxpayers' money. No tenders! And that is supposed to be helping the business men who have built this province, letting people of that calibre come in here, and then to not give any contracts to the people of this

province. I say it's unfair.

And then if we look at Prince Albert, they've made another announcement, Mr. Chairman — oh, the big announcement, because, you know, it was on the eve of the election, as you know. They were just about ready to call that election and they had to have some more announcements, Mr. Chairman. And they announced that there was going to be a paper-mill in Prince Albert. Well so far all they have done there is to transfer over the plant, which the people of this province own — \$248 million, they own — and they gave it over to a multinational corporation. And you know what they say to the multinational corporation? Well boys, you can have this plant and you pay the price, the \$248 million, to the people of Saskatchewan. But I'll tell you, we'll give you a good deal. You just pay for it if indeed you have profits. You know, it's a multinational corporation, and that's the terms. Well I'll tell you, if you'd give the business community the opportunity and the hand-outs that you're giving to these birds that are coming from outside the province, I'll tell you, the Saskatchewan economy would be booming.

You're not giving any tax holidays to the local business men. What you've done is, you've taken the property improvement grant away from them. You've increased taxation; that's what you have done. So don't stand there and say that you've worked on behalf of the small-business community, because if you gave the small-business community even a fair deal, they'll make it. And the laugh of all is this minister standing up. He obviously hasn't been around the province very much because he is saying that now what we're doing is putting manufacturing and small business into the small communities throughout the province.

Well I'll tell you, in the constituency of Quill Lakes under an NDP government, we had more manufacturing industries per capita than anywhere else in Saskatchewan. And I'm going to name some of them, Mr. Chairman, to demonstrate how well we were doing and diversifying and taking to the small communities manufacturing industries. A little community of Englefeld, Doepker Brothers, manufacturing steel boxes for transport trucks and cultivators and other types of farm equipment, employing some 50 to 60 people year-round, sometimes double-shifting. That's the little community of Englefeld. and you ask, Mr. Chairman, when was that started? And I'll tell you, it didn't start under this government.

(1630)

And you go to the community of St. Gregor and I'll tell you, you'll find there Michel's tarps, preparing and manufacturing tarps for farm trucks. And in the same industry they're manufacturing windows for construction of houses. And if you stay in the little community of St. Gregor, you have Western Industries, building steel trucks all across this province. Those were . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well when did they start, Mr. Chairman? I'll tell you, they were there before these birds came to office. They were there, employing 50, 100 people and also in St. Gregor, a major trucking firm. And I'll tell you, that major trucking firm was there before this government

came into office.

And let us go into another community, in Watson. There we have Kerpan Industries which manufacture and rebuild farm equipment. If you go north of Watson you have another plant that was started under the New Democratic Party . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Pardon? And if you go around the constituency, I tell you, Mr. Minister, there you find a nucleus of manufacturing and small businesses brought to the local community.

And if you go into the community of Muenster, there's Al's Welding. Many of you will know Al's Welding, and what is he doing? He's building hydraulics and doing very well. I'll tell you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's all right, but I'll tell you those industries were there and I'll tell you, Mr. Minister, you haven't encouraged or increased the number of businesses throughout the province.

But I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, obviously you're going . . . You've been in now your fifth year of the term, and one of the very important things I think that is necessary — and I'm sure that if you're working with Tourism and Small Business and particularly Small Business, that what you would be interested in, in conjunction with the government, is to determine what is the projected economic growth for this province, say, in the next 10 years. Can you indicate to us whether the small-business men and the people of this province . . . Have you any projection as to what type of economic growth that is being projected for Saskatchewan to the year 1994?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, once again I'll try to work backwards. The member spoke at some length about small manufacturing. I think it's . . . the only statistic I will provide there is that in '85, total manufacturing shipment are up 8 per cent over 1984. I think manufacturing starts in this province are increasing, are moving forward. And to indicate that they occurred only previously is simply not borne out by facts.

However, what we have heard here has been a clear, unequivocal denunciation of a number of projects in this province that have the people of this province very excited. He indicated that the upgrader being built at the Co-op Refinery here in Regina was not under way. As usual, the member, and I suppose his party, was not in attendance at the recent Saskatchewan manufacturing opportunities conference which was held here in Regina not many blocks from this very building.

The Co-op had a booth at that particular conference, Mr. Chairman, and they had two albums full of pictures of the progress that has been made at the Co-op Refinery to date, in bringing that project on. Tenders are being let. That project is moving ahead. Labour agreements are being worked on. That project is in fact moving ahead very clearly. And the member opposite indicates that he doesn't believe in upgrading.

When you consider the opportunities, if we are going to have an energy industry in the province of Saskatchewan in the future, it will be in heavy oil and in medium oil. And it seems to me to make very little sense to pump our heavy

oil and then work against the problems it has to ship it to Alberta or to eastern Canada to be upgraded and refined. And I believe that the concept of upgrading heavy oil here in Saskatchewan at the Co-op Refinery in Regina and at the Husky facility in Lloydminster make eminent good sense, both economically and both as a policy effort. And I'm very, very disappointed to hear that the member opposite doesn't share that view with me.

He indicates as well — and I'm sure there'll be many farmers surprised, very surprised, to hear him indicate that their party is against the establishment of a fertilizer plant here in the province of Saskatchewan.

We have done some feasibility work. It has been indicated that it's reasonable and it's economically viable to tie a fertilizer plant to that upgrader; that the natural gas that is used, that the ammonia that is used will be a very — there will be great synergism; that those will go together well. We have an investor that is very interested in pursuing that. And to stand in his place and say, no, the NDP are against that, must come as a significant shock to an awful lot of farmers in this province who find those fertilizer input costs one of their big problems.

He has indicated as well, and this I find strange, that they are against the Weyerhaeuser project, the paper-mill in P.A. I know, Mr. Chairman, that the candidate in P.A. has clearly indicated he's not against that mill. And yet down here, we hear the member from Quill Lakes, the member from Assiniboia, and the member from Regina North East, railing against that project. Someone should tell their candidate in P.A. I hear the Leader of the Opposition in North Battleford suggesting that possibly this bacon plant is not that bad; it's a reasonable project. We come down here and they speak against it at every turn.

I think it's important, Mr. Chairman, that the people of this province . . . I know that when I challenge them they won't stand in their place and say what their position is, but I think it's important that the people of this province get a clear indication from this party, where they stand on these major projects. Because regardless of what the member from Quill Lakes thinks, these major projects will have significant benefit for small-business men in Saskatchewan — the people in North Battleford who sell homes, who sell groceries, who sell shoes, who sell clothes, who provide the service to those people that will work on that project and then who will work in that project. The people in Regina will do the same thing.

Prince Albert. The business community in Prince Albert is — I'll use the word "ecstatic" about this project that has been announced and that will continue.

And so, Mr. Chairman, I think it is very, very important that going into an election, which may be months away yet but which is not that far away, it is important that that party opposite stand and establish a clear statement of what they really do believe about these major projects which can have such significant impact to the province of Saskatchewan and significant impact to the small-business community. And I really believe that's something that should happen.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, the last part of his speech

was a statement or a request for forecasts on a 10-year economic forecast. I think trying to project a 10-year economic forecast is like trying to project oil prices. Someone once said they'd like to hire a one-armed economist so he couldn't say, "on the other hand." However, all independent forecasts that we have been able to uncover show a strong economic growth forecast for the province of Saskatchewan, providing — and I emphasize this — providing that the major projects that are now under way continue to go ahead.

And so I think in terms of looking at economic growth in this province, it is very important that those projects do in fact move forward, and again, consequently makes it even more imperative that the people of this province learn once and for all what the position of the opposition is on these projects. And I think it's been clearly stated here by the member from Quill Lakes that he is against all of them. And I would be very interested in hearing other members of their caucus, or even their leader, state that they are as categorically opposed to those projects as the member from Quill Lakes appears to be.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well, Mr. Minister, all I can say, armed with no facts and no statistics to support your dismal performance and the dismal performance of this government, I must say that you would rate A for effort, but not for facts. I just want to indicate, Mr. Minister, in conclusion here of this aspect of it, that the business people of this province are indeed very concerned. And they are desperately concerned with the direction of this government, the lack of management in this government, in all of the indicators which indicated a decline rather than a growth in the economic well-being of Saskatchewan.

There is no doubt that the retail sales have not increased as rapidly as other places in Canada. We find that in retail sales last year was the worst, other than Prince Edward island, with only a 7.8 per cent increase, and the average in Canada was 10.6.

We find that in respect to housing starts, if you had . . . you know, if you had growth in the working labour force, you'd think you'd have a growth also in housing. Well do you realize that last year there was only 5,300 new housing starts in this province — the lowest since 1971, if you can believe it.

You look at the new investment, and you find that in relative to 1981, new private and public investment is down in real terms. If you look at the welfare rolls, you find, Mr. Chairman, that the welfare rolls have increased. You find that one in 10 in this province are either on welfare or on unemployment insurance — 47,000 people on unemployment last month; 16 per cent of our young people unemployed; 18,000 young people walking the streets of the cities looking for jobs, and this minister is bragging about how he has increased the generator of the small business.

And I'll say to you, if you take a look at the amount of those unemployed employables, I think that tells the story. Here are the people who want to work, desperately want to work, and in 1981 there was 4,500 and today there's about 15,000 — just about 15,000, and that's the

economic conditions that we have in this province. We have more money spent on advertising, promoting what's pretended to be going on, rather than concrete efforts of economic development. And let there be no mistake.

And certainly I want to say, Mr. Minister, that you don't have to speak for me. I'll speak for myself. And I'll tell you that in respect to the upgrader, I don't need you putting the position, my position. Because my position is that you have failed. You had an open for big business, and they looked at your management. It was so bad they said, we wouldn't even touch them. And that's what's happened. You got an upgrader. And if you had big business come rolling in here, investing under this new climate, where is the private money? And that's what the small-business men are saying.

On the contrary, what you see, what has happened under the administration, is small business after small business failing in Saskatchewan. And what I want to say, Mr. Chairman, is that if the minister will in fact put forward what the projection is for Saskatchewan, then I want to, to the people of Saskatchewan and the small-business men who indeed may be watching today . . . because they're interested in the performance of this minister. And I'll tell you, they aren't very impressed. They watched you the other night, and they say there's nothing there.

But I'll tell you what the economic forecasts are for this province. You know what? And this is their friend, the friend of the government; in fact, the chief adviser who practically wrote their election campaign last time, the Royal Bank.

(1645)

You know the Royal Bank, Boyd Robertson and gang. The big donators to the Tory party. Do you know what they have said? Well they say that Saskatchewan's economic growth will lag behind the national average. And that's from 1984 projected to 1994.

The bank's *Econoscope* forecast predicted Saskatchewan economy would grow on an average of 3.1 per cent from the year 1984 to 1994, compared to the national average of 3.3 per cent.

And you know what the Royal Bank goes on to say? Do you know who's going to lead all of Canada, which province? Well there are only 10 of them. But I'll tell you, a province that has been certainly reducing the unemployment and has involved the small-business community is going to lead, and that's Manitoba. "Manitoba is expected to lead in the nation in economic growth during the 10-year period." That's what the Royal Bank says. That's what your friends say: that Manitoba is going to lead in economic growth.

And you know, this here diatribe that is put forward by the minister indicating there was no economic growth before — why doesn't he stand up and give some of the indicators which we have reviewed? Why wouldn't they be positive if indeed your economic strategy was working?

All I can say to you, and I repeat, Mr. Minister, if you take a look at it: "Bank says provincial growth will trail national average." And I just want to read that to you again. "Saskatchewan's economic growth will lag behind the national average," it says:

The bank's *Econoscope* forecasts predicted Saskatchewan economy would grow an average of 3.1 per cent a year from 1984 to 1994, compared with the national average of 3.3 per cent.

Manitoba — I repeat — Manitoba, under the New Democratic Party . . . It doesn't say that but I'm just putting that in. "Manitoba is expected to lead in the nation in economic growth during the 10-year period."

So that's what the Royal Bank has indicated. And obviously there are factors which will determine, you know, the success of a given economy, and we recognize that. But the thing that . . . What has happened here, Mr. Minister — and I know that you haven't been in this portfolio very long, and so it's unfair to really put the blame on you — but the economic direction of this government has been made on false premises. Because if Saskatchewan is going to develop, I'll tell you, you have to build on the strengths of Saskatchewan. And the strengths of Saskatchewan are Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan small business, Saskatchewan agriculture, and Saskatchewan working people. And that is how Saskatchewan built its strong economic base in the '70s into the '80s. We didn't put on big conferences, open for business — big business — and desert the small business.

I'll say to you, Mr. Minister, that the small-business community are concerned. I'll tell you, I was on a tour of this province, Mr. Chairman, and I was talking to some business men. And let me tell you what their concern was. They said, you know what, under the New Democratic Party we had Sedco, and small-business people were able to get loans from Sedco; Sedco would provide us with loans.

And this business man . . . I believe it was . . . Well it was in the Kelsey-Tisdale constituency, which is looking very good, by the way, for us. And I was talking to this business man and he said, you know, in this area we have MacMillan Bloedel, MacMillan Bloedel — that's what they said. In this community — that's the Hudson Bay — they had MacMillan Bloedel. And you know what? Sedco, in one year, the second year of administration, under their loan portfolio, do you know what they did? They gave 75 per cent of the total loan portfolio to MacMillan Bloedel — one multinational company, one multinational corporation.

And you know what this small-business man said to me? He said, we used to be able to get help from Sedco. But he said we can't now under this government because what they're doing is turning it over to the MacMillan Bloedel companies. They're getting 75 per cent of the whole loan portfolio. And they say that's not fair, and I agree with them.

And certainly I say to the small-business men of this

province that the New Democratic Party will, in fact, again reinstate the privileges and work in conjunction with the small-business community of this province. We have in the past and we will in the future. And I'll tell you that we're going to build on the strengths of Saskatchewan, and the basic strength of Saskatchewan has been the small-business men that have generated the majority of the jobs.

And certainly your policies, Mr. Minister, have been a dismal failure. And you ask the business men around here. You laugh. Oh, the Minister of Justice laughs. Well I'll tell you, be better go talk to some of the small-business men and they'll laugh him right out of their premises . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Because. I'll tell you. Because I'll tell you. the business community today is not doing well. They are not doing well today under this type of government.

And part of the problem is that you have not set your priorities straight. You deserted the small-business community of this province. That's what you did. And then suddenly near the end of your term, when you're about to get turfed out, you try to reverse that procedure. That's what you're trying to do. I'll tell you, it's too little too late. You had nine and five-eighths you were going to give them. You were going to give the small-business men nine and five-eighths money.

Well I'll tell you how much you're working for the small-business men. Why wouldn't you have brought that in immediately to help the small-business men? But you sat on it and you waited until the interest rate was almost as low as the program which you introduced.

And so I think it's very clear, Mr. Minister, that your policies have failed. Your emphasis on big business has not created a benefit to the small business. It hasn't created a benefit to the treasury of this province. It hasn't in fact gave jobs to our young people. It hasn't cut back on the welfare roll. It hasn't increased the development or investment of private or public funds.

So all I can say, Mr. Minister, is that while you have been in there only a short time, the overall strategy of the government, for which you have to take responsibility, has in fact been detrimental towards the small-business men of this province.

And we can go further, and we will when we get into Supply and Services — the very nature of unfairness of contracts to business people. The lack of the tendering process is evident under this government. And contractors and small-business men are coming to us and saying, will you guarantee when you're re-elected that you will in fact reinstate the fair policy of tendering that you had during the 11 years? And we say, of course that's the way to go. And they say, do you realize that this government doesn't give us an opportunity? It's hand-outs; it's who's closest to the minister or to the government or to whoever contact he has. That's what it is. They're saying it's not fair. There is no tender process. And I'll tell you, they are annoyed by that.

And you know, you talk about this government wanting economic growth. And do you know what they've done,

Mr. Chairman? You think if you're going to have economic growth, at least the former premier of the right-wing government had the right idea. He said, we'll have a good transportation system; we'll build the highways; and we'll put in four lanes from Regina to Saskatoon. Well he never got economic development under that right-wing government, the former Ross Thatcher.

But this outfit here are going around talking about great economic development. And do you know what they abandoned? They abandoned building highways. The highway system in this province has deteriorated to the lowest level it has since the '40s.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order. The highway system of the province is not related to Tourism and Small Business.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well I would wonder how the chairman . . . I'd like to ask the chairman: how would a tourist get into Saskatchewan if he didn't go over the roads, other than fly? Surely the roads are an integral part of Small Business and Tourism.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, order.

**Mr. Koskie:** — And what I was saying, Mr. Chairman, when I was interrupted . . . We're dealing here with Small Business and Tourism, and someone had the audacity to mention that we can't talk about highways when we're talking about tourism. Can you imagine?

Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order.

**Mr. Koskie:** — What I want to say, Mr. Chairman, is another very integral part of tourism and small business is a good transportation system. And there is no doubt that the highway systems of this province have deteriorated to the extent that they've never been seen before. We had a highway system that was admired across Canada. We had one-seventh of all the paved highways in Canada.

And what I'm saying is here, a minister who has failed in respect to supporting and giving an atmosphere conducive to small business and the growth of small business, also has failed miserably in so far as tourism is concerned, in that he has allowed the roads to totally deteriorate here in the province.

If you look . . . Not only that, what has happened is in respect . . . Not only has he allowed them to deteriorate, but he has also prevented the small-business men of this province from building and constructing those roads.

So basically what we have then, Mr. Minister, is all of the economic indicators which indicate a lack of economic activity. We have a projection which is made by a reliable source, your friend the Royal Bank, indicating that future economic growth will be small. And we find that in respect to small business, we have had closures of small businesses the like of which we haven't seen before. And I really think, Mr. Minister, that you have an obligation, if you can give a massive conference to sit down with the outside investors of other parts of the world, that I think it

would be incumbent upon you, and I would urge you, to sit down with the small-business men of Saskatchewan and allow them to have some input and to give you some direction. Because certainly this government opposite needs direction.

I'll tell you, if you don't do it, Mr. Minister, you won't be arrogantly standing over there predicting that come another election, that you're going to be in government again. Because that's not what the polls are saying and that's not what the small-business men are saying. They're saying that this government has so mismanaged the economy of Saskatchewan that it's time to turf them out. They say to us, regardless of philosophical differences, it's time that Saskatchewan got back to a management of the economy. They say that, we are not going to tolerate any longer a government that will rack up a total debt of the province of \$9 billion — \$8,500 for every man, woman, and child. That's the future; that's the legacy of your government.

That's what your policy has given the people of this province — high unemployment, high welfare, massive debt, increased taxation, decrease in public and private investment. That's the record of your government. And I think that you should be ashamed of yourself, and I think that this is the reason why this government refuses to call an election, even though their four-year term has run out. I say that they're hiding; they're afraid to go to the people and allow them to evaluate the miserable record of this government.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, I want to ask you: have you, since you have . . . I know that you have toured around from community to community. Have you had an opportunity to call a conference of business people of Saskatchewan in order that they could give you some directions so that in fact the dismal efforts that you have been putting forward up to this time could in fact be reversed, and indeed you could . . . What's your problem? And indeed get some policies which would be of the benefit to those people, the small-business people of Saskatchewan, which built this province. That's what I want to ask you. Are you prepared to reverse your policies, put into place a priority of small business . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order. It being 5 o'clock, I do now recess this House until 7 o'clock later this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.