

EVENING SITTING

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure
Executive Council
Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10

Item 1 (continued)

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, I want to turn to an area of concern, and we've dealt with it to some extent during your estimates, and you didn't have the full statistics. And it's really the overall financial health of the agricultural community. I have major concerns, and there has been various movements on your part in addressing some of the concerns. There has been less than adequate, I think, in the federal government. But when I look at the recent report that is submitted by the wheat pool, the relative health of the agricultural community in Saskatchewan is really very frightening. And from the statistics . . . And I wonder whether you are in agreement with the general finding of the wheat pool findings. They say that:

In doing so, we found that in 1986 there are 36 per cent of Saskatchewan farmers facing financial difficulty.

So they're indicating 36 per cent facing financial difficulty.

Seventeen per cent are in moderate financial difficulty, 10 per cent are in severe financial difficulty, and 9 per cent are non-viable.

Now, Mr. Premier, if you have some 65,000 farmers in Saskatchewan — and you can give me the exact number; you'll have that, but it's in that range of 65,000 — and if you look at these percentages that are outlined in the report of the wheat pool, the 10 per cent in severe financial position would be about 6,500; the 9 per cent non-viable is another 5,950. So that's close to 12,000 farmers. And then there would be another 11,000 or more with moderate financial difficulty.

I think also the Farm Credit Corporation, in their analysis, Mr. Premier, has indicated in respect to the farmers dealing with the Farm Credit Corporation, they find that while there was a slight drop of about from 7,000 to 6,900 in the number of farmers that are in arrears in the payments to Farm Credit Corporation, what they did find out is that the intensity or the amount of arrears had increased very significantly from last year to the present.

And so I want to ask the Premier, as the Minister of Agriculture, and having discussed it in your estimates . . . And I don't want to take too much time, but this is a new report and I wonder whether you are prepared to say that your statistics are similar in the review of the general health of the agricultural community. Basically what we're looking at, as I say, Mr. Premier, on my interpretation of it: 10 per cent in severe financial difficulty which would be about 6,500; 9 per cent at the stage which are included as non-viable.

And I think if they look at the definition of non-viable, and it's defined with the wheat pool report, is where the . . . Naturally they have a large amount of debt, but also there has been some legal actions taken in order to . . . foreclosure action against the farmers.

So non-viable are those what they indicate are those likely to be wiped out. It doesn't indicate how soon, but that is the situation. We're looking at the situation according to the wheat pool survey of some 12,000 farmers — 36 per cent in some degree of problems and, I submit, over 19 per cent in severe or non-viable position.

I was wondering if the Premier is aware of the report and whether his analysis in his department would generally concur with those findings of the wheat pool.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm aware of the report. We've had an opportunity to look at it and review it. It provides us with a relatively recent analysis of the farm financial situation. One of the interesting parts of it, Mr. Chairman, is that it says that 7 per cent of the non-viable farmers this year control about 26 per cent of the debt and about 5 per cent of the assets, which is saying that the debt is relatively concentrated in the hands of a fairly small number of individuals.

The average age of these operators is about 33, which suggests to me that they have — and to anybody that looks at the information — that they have purchased their farm or gone into debt at a time when obviously land prices were pretty high and interest rates ranged about 18 to 20 to 22 per cent. And this group of farmers have pretty reasonable productivity. In fact they're probably one of the most productive sectors in our entire agricultural industry. They range from about 30 years old to about 45 years old, and they're more aggressive, the kind of individuals that have taken risk, that have bought land, that have invested in equipment, but obviously have been caught at high land prices, and then on top of that, lowering grain prices and obviously lowering land prices — and at the same time, high interest rates.

So yes, I'm familiar with it. It is along the lines that our own research shows, and in fact it backs up much of what I have said recently of those who have gone out to invest and purchase, those who would be in the neighbourhood of 30 years old to 35, 40 years old, some of them more aggressive, progressive farmers got caught in a situation.

Not to be antagonistic, I would suggest that when interest rates were going from about 8 or 10 per cent, and it took a number of years to go up to 22 per cent, if somebody had done something about it, these young people wouldn't have been in near the problems they are today. But obviously they had to go right through the peak, and had to go through an election and finally find somebody else that would help them with low interest rates.

But I think that the wheat pool numbers are up to date; they're certainly current and along the lines that we have seen from our own officials.

Mr. Koskie: — Well taking a look at the 17 per cent which

are in moderate financial difficulty, the 10 per cent in severe, and the 9 per cent non-viable, I'm wondering what particular assessments have you made; what particular programs you think that could be instituted, and whether you have discussed it more thoroughly with the federal government in order to see whether the Farm Credit Corporation . . . It seems to me that one of the things . . . The Farm Credit Corporation became not very effective for a number of years in the late '70s and the early '80s; and the reason it did was because they did not provide long-term lower interest rate loans.

And I'm wondering whether you have been able to discuss with the Minister of Agriculture, federal counterpart, in order to come up with a method of addressing the nature of the problem with those farmers that find themselves in financial difficulty.

I think I agree with you these are . . . It's not a case totally of . . . I shouldn't say it's not a case at all of management. It's a case of circumstances.

And in life that happens to be what happens to many of us. Some are very successful because they make the move at a given time. And those who wanted to get into farming at a given time did find circumstances similar to what you're saying.

But you have to realize that they were able to go into that because the financial institutions made all the money available, over and above what the Farm Credit Corporation was doing.

And to have subsidized at that time . . . When a quarter section of land came up there was so many after it, as you know. To have subsidized interest rates at that time when they were in the rush of purchasing and building their estate, not realizing that there would be such a dramatic drop in the price of their commodities, and such a dramatic increase in some of the other aspects of their input . . .

And so I don't think that you can turn back the pages, and say, well, you should have been doing this. Because at that time, if you will look, you will find that young people were buying a lot of land at that time. And the credit was available. And they were buying it with those . . . acknowledging those prices.

And so, what I'm saying to you, we have the circumstances right now. And what you're looking at is some 13,000 farmers potentially being wiped out. And I'm wondering whether you have any . . . Have you addressed this particular . . . And are you able to announce any approach to addressing this major problem?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, yes we have, Mr. Chairman, and I will just go through the list of recommendations of the task force that the wheat pool has just finished. And the task force recommendations are as follows.

First, they support the principle of a farm debt review panel, which we have already initiated. So they believe that's a good idea, and we will certainly continue it, and I have encouraged the federal government to do the same.

Secondly, in cases where good relationships exist between the lender and the borrower, a debt restructuring appears to be the only solution. Well obviously we've looked at restructuring with our farm review panels and our counselling assistance panel — a complete restructuring — so I have to agree with that.

We go on to look for the task force supports the initiatives of a number of provincial governments providing for loan guarantees on operating credit to farmers. Well we have got 6 per cent money out, about a billion dollars, at \$25 an acre. That's precisely what we have.

It goes on to say that they recognize that it is not possible to save all farmers in severe financial difficulty. Therefore the task force supports the federal government budget initiative to establish Canadian rural transition programs, so that we're looking at a farm assistance line at the transition and so forth. And I agree with that and have encouraged that.

The task force recommends getting more equity into the agriculture scene as opposed to debt. And I've been talking about that for some time in terms of converting some of the debt to equity, or looking for various new financial instruments that would provide equity over debt.

It also recommends that the Farm Credit Corporation should institute a long-term, fixed-rate financing at low interest rates. I certainly agree with that, and we've been encouraging the federal government to do that, that their farm improvement loans be changed, that the government guarantee be provided in an interim basis.

We have looked at various kinds of arrangements where the government federally and provincially can proceed along the lines recommended by the task force. Mortgage rate protection programs, obviously that we've introduced.

Number eight, it's recommended that the federal and provincial governments consider a mechanism to provide guaranteeing privately financed mortgages. Well I already recommended the Agribond. I did a release the other day on the cabinet committee on farm input costs, and that's one of the things farmers said to us. And we've already got it in the mill and we're going to be pursuing it.

The task force, number nine, recommends that the government policy should provide the appropriate environment to encourage longer-term lease arrangement between private individuals through Crown leases. Well as you know, we have both been selling land and providing better leasing arrangements in the public sector to farmers, so that we've already moved in that regard.

So, in terms of the wheat pool's report — the hon. member asks if we're familiar with it; obviously we're very familiar. The majority of the recommendations in the report, we've already picked up on and have either done ourselves, or will do or are encouraging the federal government to do, or have convinced the federal government to do with respect to their 6 per cent money

- cutting costs, setting up counselling assistance programs, long-run fixed interest rates, and so forth.

So I believe the wheat pool . . . In fact, we co-financed this piece of research with the wheat pool, and so we're familiar with the studies. It's consistent with what we've done in the past and it's consistent with what we thought we should be doing when we were talking with farmers, and it fits very well, as a matter of fact, with our cabinet committee on farm input costs.

So yes, we're prepared to continue to do as much as possible to help the farmers.

(1915)

Mr. Koskie: — Well, I'll leave that — only to say, Mr. Premier, that this is in 1986, these statistics, and we have 17 per cent, as I said, in moderate financial difficulty, 10 per cent in severe, and 9 per cent are non-viable.

Now all I can say is that some action you have taken, there's no doubt about that — I give you credit for that — but we are sitting here with the realization, Mr. Premier, of approximately 12,000 farmers with a potential of being wiped out.

And I'll tell you that's what's in place right now, particularly with the announcement in respect to the price of grain. The major decrease in the initial price is going to, I think, increase the realization that many of those with heavy debt will not be able to survive.

What I'm asking you then, Mr. Premier, is: why are you not in fact pressing, as many of the major farm organizations, for the — along with the wheat pool, for instance — for a \$2 billion deficiency payment?

I don't think it's at all possible for the Saskatchewan farmer to compete on a world market when you know yourself that there's heavy subsidization in the U.S. and there is even heavier subsidization in Europe, in the economic common market.

So I'm asking you . . . We moved a resolution in the House here asking the federal government to proceed with a deficiency payment, and the records will show that members of your government voted against that resolution — a resolution which is supported, as I said, by major farm organizations. I don't know any other solution. Do you have another solution whereby the Saskatchewan farmer can compete against the treasury of the United States and the European Common Market with a major subsidization?

So I would just like to ask you: one, what the comparison of the subsidy that Canadian farmers get relative to the United States and relative to the European. I know there is a very much higher in the United States and still higher in Europe. I ask you: can you outline the degree of subsidization comparison to the Canadian farmer, and do you agree that there has to be a deficiency payment? And why won't you support it to the extent of the major farm organizations?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the hon.

member and I, and the Leader of the Opposition and I, went through this in my Agriculture estimates — the very same question — and I answered it in some detail for the Leader of the Opposition, and responded in some detail for the member from Quill Lakes.

So I'll give you the same answer that I gave you before when you asked the very same question. I have supported and I led the arguments for deficiency payments. And I read from the articles out of Swan River, Manitoba. So I've already done that. And I read it and it's public and I've endorsed it and it's there. I can dig up the articles and the editorials that said that I did that, so there's no point in you suggesting otherwise.

Secondly, the research done by the Canadian Wheat Board says that the American subsidy is about \$2.63 a bushel — about — and the Canadian one is about 80 cents, and the European is over \$3 a bushel.

Now what I outlined to your leader when he asked me about it, as I said, for about every billion dollars that we get in terms of extra money from the federal government or others, it's worth about a dollar a bushel. So if you add up the things that we've got with respect to fuel prices in terms of no tax; domestic price wheat; freight rates; elevator tariffs; western grain stabilization payments, 580 million; fall payments; FCC (Farm Credit Corporation) rates, about \$1 billion at 6 per cent money; drought payments; flood payments; capital gains tax; crop insurance payments; and a billion in deficiency payments that we're already requested; you're in the ballpark of 2 to \$3 billion.

Now at about a billion dollars for every dollar a bushel, you're looking at 2 to \$3 a bushel. Now I think your leader suggested it was fair to add them all up, because you can skin it any way you like, but if it's public money that's going into agriculture, we've got to compare it.

So I said we'll take some in stabilization because the Americans don't have a stabilization mechanism. We'll take some in terms of higher priced domestic wheat. That's fair enough. We'll take some, about a billion dollars, with respect to export subsidies, and that's another dollar a bushel. And we'll put them all together. So somewhere between 2 and \$3 a bushel in 1986-87 crop year, you're going to look at in terms of additional money that either we have or I have recommended, or both.

So I've been through it before and I'll go through the numbers in more detail if you like. But obviously we've got about a dozen things in terms of money, specifics we've recommended from the federal government. And they've delivered, and we've requested more. And I can give you the newspaper clippings that show that frankly we have led the charge on most of these, whether it's capital gains or fuel prices and higher domestic price wheat.

I've asked for \$11; looks like we're going to get 10; maybe we will get 11. Very high interim western grain stabilization payments; it's exactly what we got, etc., etc.

Mr. Koskie: — Just to be perfectly clear, what you're

indicating here, I take it, is that when you have requested of the federal government, you have requested \$1 billion towards deficiency payments. Is that the figure that you have set and have justified that on the basis that some of the previous payments represent close to another billion dollars through various other programs and therefore \$1 billion is what you're asking for deficiency payments? Just so we're clear, is that the figure that you're asking, and is that the request that you'll put to the federal government?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — The request to the federal government on the billion dollars was to compensate Canadian farmers, western Canadian farmers, in terms of the export subsidy on the export grain that the American farmer was receiving. And the premiers, western Canadian premiers, all of them suggested that a billion dollars would be sufficient to compensate for the export subsidy in the United States in terms of the programs they have now under the farm Bill.

Mr. Koskie: — Well in respect to the agricultural Bill that the U.S. government has put forward in support of the farmers in the United States, has any effort been made through the negotiations to have that put on the table of the free trade discussions? Can you indicate to us whether or not that was in your submission? Have you any guarantee from the federal government that it has in fact been put on the table, and have you anything to report through the federal negotiator whether or not they're prepared to look at it? Because the impact of the agricultural Bill that they put through in the United States gets progressively worse in so far as subsidization goes. There are stages of it, and I understand that if it's left in place we have a greater subsidy going to the American farmers. So I think it's important that it would be addressed immediately in order to put the Canadian farmer not at a disadvantage. So is that under discussion, do you know, or on the table?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, it's on the table, and we said that we don't want to negotiate with the United States unless the farm Bill is on the table. But I point out again to the hon. member — he's concerned about the U.S. farm Bill and what it might do to farmers. When we had interest rates at 22 per cent he didn't do a thing for farmers, nor did his cabinet — 22 per cent interest rates that got people in a lot of trouble, and a great deal of trouble . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

And he says from his seat that they were making a bunch of money. Well you ask him. I mean he won his riding on a recount, on a recount and it's a rural riding. As a result 22 per cent interest rates . . . And this wasn't in the United States; this was right here in Canada. Interest rates were lower in the United States. Twenty-two per cent, and he would do absolutely nothing for the farmer. He says as he chirps from his seat, oh, they were making money. Well I'll tell you, an awful lot of them will tell you that's exactly when they got into trouble. Not today at 8 per cent money that they can get from us, or 6 per cent from farm credit, or 6 per cent or zero per cent through cash advanced — at 22 per cent, not a dime for farmers, not a thing. And he can look at me and say, what am I going to do about the United States farm Bill? Well he had it right in his own grasp and didn't do a thing, and people won't forget that. They didn't forget it in '82, they won't

forget it now, and they won't forget it next year.

So you can come and ask me. I'll tell you, the farm Bill is on the negotiating table; that's one of the reasons that we should be negotiating. That's the reasons that I'm in the United States.

Most of the reason that people are in trouble, and anybody that's in agriculture knows it, is we had to go through 20-some per cent interest rates, and it takes you years to get that back. And nobody was there to help until we got a chance at it — nobody. So we made a difference and we'll still be there and we'll do everything we can to change the U.S. farm Bill at the same time.

Mr. Koskie: — Well we can discuss electoral successes. I'll tell you, Mr. Premier, I haven't run twice and lost twice. I haven't been assigned, as a leader of a party, the best seat that the Tories could provide, and you lost — and you lost.

So I think, if you want to stand up and brag about electoral success, let us compare. One out of three, that's what you had. So you know, you ran twice . . . You ran in a good seat in Saskatoon; you ran in the best seat that the Tory party could give you in Estevan, and you booted that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He brought it up. I'll tell you, if you want to discuss electoral success, Mr. Premier, you're a bit of a loser and obviously afraid to call the election in fear of losing again.

But let's get into the situation, Mr. Premier. If one takes a look at the situation of farmers when we were in office, I'll tell you, the net income was better than under your administration. And the basic problem that the farmer is running into now is the inactivity of the federal Tory government.

I'll tell you, the major competitors of the world, their governments, have in fact put together a very substantial support Bill behind the farmers. In United States, as you said, a major subsidization of \$2.63 a bushel; more in Europe; and here, something like 83 cents, I believe you indicated.

What I'm saying is that . . . And I'm asking you: have you got a commitment from the federal government that they will indeed be putting into effect a deficiency payment in order that the farmers can make plans for the future knowing what support they will be getting? Have you had any meetings in respect and have you got any commitment from the federal government that they will in fact be putting forward a deficiency payment?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — As I mentioned, Mr. Chairman, the premiers and the ministers of Agriculture . . . First the western premiers recommended the federal government put up a billion dollars in negotiating with the United States and be prepared to spend that billion dollars in the event that the U.S. export subsidies continue.

Secondly, as Minister of Agriculture, I met with the ministers across the country, as well as the federal minister; recommended the same thing. When we met as first ministers with the Prime Minister, I made the same recommendations to him and I also wrote him to say

exactly that. At every possible level that I've been able to participate — in the western premiers, the ministers of Agriculture, in the first ministers, in letters and correspondence between me and the Prime Minister — it has been recommended. So in terms of provincial access and provincial leverage and support of my colleagues, the premiers on either side of me, we've all made the same representation. So the hon. members know whether I've made the request and have demanded it — I certainly have.

(1930)

Mr. Koskie: — Well, I guess you can say that you demanded it. What I asked you is whether or not you got a commitment from him; whether in fact the farmers of Saskatchewan can look forward. Because what I want to say to you, that I don't know how you can be satisfied with the response of the federal government.

Certainly when they had to bail out the banks, it wasn't hard to find substantial amount of money. When they wanted to give the oil companies a deal — bang! — they had money, and very, very rapidly. No problem. Total commitment. I'll tell you, when it comes to farmers now, you're hedging. You say you have asked. I'm asking you: have you got a commitment from the federal government in respect to deficiency payments. Can you in fact indicate since the premiers put forward a resolution in requesting deficiency payments . . . What I'm asking you, Mr. Premier: have you got a commitment from the federal government that they will in fact be putting it in, and if so, when can we expect the announcement?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, you're just wasting everybody's time as usual. You expect me to speak for the Prime Minister, and when I do you won't accept it. Well I'll give you the commitments. If you can sit in your seat long enough to listen to them, I'll give you those that we've already delivered . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Delivered. Not commitments. This is no promise; this is action. You want some action; I'll give you the action. I'll go through it tonight if you want it all. I mean we've been through this before.

We asked to take the taxes off farm fuel from the federal government. We asked and we got a commitment. And what happened? They provided \$80 million because they took the tax off farm fuel. How's that? Not only a commitment, but action.

We asked for higher priced domestic wheat, and the committee recommends \$10 a bushel. That's \$200 million from the federal government. How's that for commitment and action.

We've asked to have them freeze freight rates, and they said, we will do it. That was a commitment and they did, and that's \$40 million.

We asked them to freeze elevator tariffs. Do you know what? They committed to that and they did it. They're flat; that's worth \$10 million.

We asked for a grain stabilization interim payment. They said, we will commit to that. What did we get? Five

hundred and eighty million dollars interim, the largest ever that we've ever had in the history of the country. Delivered.

We asked for 6 per cent money in the Farm Credit Corporation — delivered and committed.

We asked for a drought payment — \$58 million. We asked for a flood payment: committed, 14.8. And we asked if the capital gains tax would be removed from farm land and they made the commitment. And do you know what? They delivered, and that's worth \$50 million a year to Saskatchewan families.

We asked them to do something on beef imports — subsidized imports from the European Economic Community — and they said, we will do that. They made a commitment and they delivered.

And we asked for help in crop insurance, and there was a \$640 million payment.

Now that in itself is worth well over a billion dollars, in not only commitments, but actions. So the member stands there and says, well did you get a commitment now to have some more money. Well I can only say to him: farmers all across the province asked him for help when he was a cabinet minister, and he gave them absolutely zero, except land bank — land bank an succession duties. That's what he gave them. The NDP death tax and land bank, and not one dime to help them with interest rates. And he's got the courage to stand in the legislature and say, well have you done anything for farmers.

There isn't a farmer out there, no matter what his political stripe, who doesn't believe he's never seen such action from a federal government or provincial government in his entire life in agriculture in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — I'm not sure why the Premier gets up and rants and raves. The question was, and I'll ask you again — a simple question.

Has the federal government — you've made the request for a deficiency payment, and you indicated that the premiers together made a request for a deficiency payment. All I'm asking you: have you got any commitment from the federal government whether or not they will be, in fact, paying a deficiency payment? And yes, or no; you don't have to rant. You can if you want, but I'll ask you again very quietly whether or not you got a commitment in respect to the federal — from the federal government for the payment of a deficiency payment.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Very quietly, very quietly, to the member opposite from Quill Lakes, who is obviously being very polite this evening, I'll say it's under serious consideration by the federal cabinet.

Mr. Koskie: — I take it — serious consideration. Can the Premier give his interpretation of what serious consideration means in so far as the commitment to the farmers of Saskatchewan? When, in fact, do you expect

an announcement, and a final decision?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, serious consideration in the past, and that's all I can go from, Mr. Chairman, is that they seriously considered taking the tax off farm fuel, and they seriously considered raising the price of domestic wheat, and they seriously considered freezing the freight rates. And they had seriously considered freezing elevator tariffs, and they give serious consideration to a large grain stabilization payment.

They give very serious consideration to 6 per cent money through farm credit; very serious consideration to drought and to flood; and very serious consideration to removing the tax on capital gains; very serious consideration to stopping the beef imports coming in here that are subsidized; very serious consideration to a new disaster mechanism; large crop insurance payments; and at least 12 out of 12 on that list. Mr. Chairman, they not only gave very serious consideration and a commitment, but they delivered.

So I would say when they're giving it serious consideration, and they're in negotiations with the United States, and we're designing a strategy that the premiers are involved with, the provinces are involved with the federal government, that they are looking at every single lever that they can use as an international strategy.

And when they tell me they're giving it serious consideration from their track record, I believe that that would be the case.

Mr. Koskie: — You know, you should really make a record and save yourself the trouble of getting up and down because really what we're asking you is specific questions.

And the House of Commons is adjourning, I believe tomorrow, and I was wondering whether you are expecting, before the House adjourns for the break, to have an announcement by the federal government.

Or are we likely . . . I think it's important for the farmers of Saskatchewan that the announcement be made in conjunction with . . . in order that they can properly plan their affairs and know what support they have, rather than attempt, as you have done consistently, to play politics with the issues relating to the farmers.

And so the House is adjourning and there has been no announcement as yet, is adjourning tomorrow, and I would expect that the announcement, if it comes, will depend upon the Premier calling an election. Someone may have to very well bail you out to try to get you elected because you can't on your own, in respect to no matter what you have said. You have demonstrated your fear to go to the polls, and that's fair enough.

I was wondering whether or not you have taken any steps in respect to the comments made by the president of the Saskatchewan chamber of commerce, Mr. Boyd Robertson, who has indicated the position of the chamber of commerce indicating that the \$25 per acre operating loan was unfair. "Offering farmers \$25 an acre operating

loans at 6 per cent interest is an unfair and inappropriate use of government funds," said Boyd Robertson, president of the Saskatchewan chamber of commerce and vice-president, I believe, of the Royal Bank, and a heavy supporter of the Tory party.

I was wondering whether you have taken any steps, Mr. Premier, to take . . . whether you have written to the chamber and asked for an explanation or whether you have sat by and allowed the president of the chamber and the vice-president of a major bank, which I suggest has benefited greatly under your administration, whether you have taken any steps in addressing that particular issue.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, this is probably the first time — well at least today, but maybe for a long time — that the member from Quill Lake and the head of the chamber of commerce and, correspondingly, the vice-president in charge of the Royal Bank, agree. The last time I was in Ag estimates the member from Quill Lakes was absolutely against the 6 per cent money. It was a universal program and he said farmers will not pay it back and it's unfair, and it wasn't the thing to do.

Now we've got the head of the chamber of commerce who says that he agrees with the member from Quill. I can't think of a time in history when the member of Quill Lakes has ever agreed with anybody in the chamber of commerce, but if they both think that it's not a good idea, well fair enough.

I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Chairman, farmers think that it is a good idea; they're supportive of it. We've got over a billion dollars out; it's the same as the cash advance from the wheat board; it's the same as the cash advance we have in the livestock industry; it's a universal program; we don't have a means test; we don't draw boundaries; and it's a very positive idea. And even if the member from Quill Lakes is against it doesn't mean that I won't continue it. I will, because I believe it's the right thing to do.

Farmers are . . . Well on the other hand I've had members from . . . or the member from Assiniboia Gravelbourg come in and say, well, you missed a farmer; you didn't get one of my farmers. And it's 99.62 per cent of all the farmers that applied got it. But I missed one and you've got the member from Quill who is standing up on the other side saying, I don't even think it's a good idea. And now he's on side with the bank who's saying, Jeez, that's not a good idea.

So we can just put it on the record, because I've got him here from the last time he was on his feet in Ag estimates, he's against the 6 per cent money; you got a banker that says he's against the 6 per cent money. The member from Quill Lakes should make up his mind. Is he on the side of farmers? I mean he was just after me for not helping them. Then I come in with 6 per cent money for everybody, a billion dollars out; he doesn't like that. He talks about the banker doesn't like it. I guess he's siding with the banker. He's against it. First he wants more money; he wants a billion dollars. And then he says, well, he doesn't like the 6 per cent money, which is a billion dollars.

I'm not so sure the member from Quill Lakes really

understands farming. I'm not so sure that he really understands the farm situation, what 22 per cent interest rates can do to a farmer if you don't help him; why farmers are so much against the land bank.

I don't know that he understands what a debenture means. I'm not sure that he really understands economic activity — whether he knows all that much about agriculture, prices, financing, markets, commodities. I'm not sure. I mean, obviously he's taken three or four different positions while he's been in here in my estimates alone, whether it's in agriculture or the Premier's estimates.

So I would say, look, if you're against it, fair enough. But we are going to continue with the 6 per cent money because it's appropriate and it's helpful, and thousands and thousands of people in this province have taken advantage of it, whether you and the banks like it or not.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Oh, a little ranting and raving by the Premier. You ask a question and he rants and he raves, but he doesn't answer the question. So I'll ask him again: in view of the comments made by the vice-president of the chamber of commerce which attacked the program of a \$25 dollar acre, 6 per cent loan to the farmers, have you — that was the question — have you, in fact, made a contact with the president of the chamber indicating that you are less than pleased with the comments which would attack the basic program of assistance to the farmers?

The president of the chamber of commerce says:

Given the competitiveness in the international markets (he asked) are we really prepared to take on the world when it comes to production costs and prices? There is an unwritten law (says this banker) in our province which suggests anyone who decides to go into agriculture has the God-given right to succeed.

If we believe in democracy and free enterprise and the right to win and lose, that right should be applied to all industries and all people, no matter what path they choose.

Those are the comments from your friend the banker, the vice-president of the Royal Bank, the president of the chamber of the commerce, also an organization closely aligned with your party.

And I'd ask you . . . the simple question was whether or not you made any representations indicating that you did not agree with the chamber of commerce attack against the farmers as set out in the article. I just ask you that simple question.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, the simple answer is, Mr. Chairman, that I'm going to provide 6 per cent money whether the banker likes it or not, and he knows that. And he can speak for you. Maybe he was talking to you.

I note here on June 11, 1986 you described the program

like this, and you say on page 1895:

Well I'll tell you, this program here doesn't help the people . . .

That's what you said about the 6 per cent money. And you said:

You deceive the people . . . You announced the program; you said it applies to all farmers. That's what you said. You weren't fair.

It only applies to only 99.62 per cent of the people. And:

That's what you've done. And wealthy farmers have gone to the banks . . .

Now this is where the banker gets it. He must get it from you.

. . . wealthy farmers have gone into (the) banks, (and) have taken this money; and they don't hid the fact, nor are they ashamed of it. But they are ashamed to have a Minister of Agriculture and a Premier that would put out a program so basically unfair.

Well here the member for Quills criticized me a week ago about how unfair this was because the farmers go and give it to the banks, and he said you designed this program and it didn't help people. Then he comes back the next week and he's in cahoots with the bank, because the bank is now saying, well that's not a very good program, Mr. Premier. And he asks me whether I agree with the banks. Well for Heaven's sake, he said it worse than the banker.

(1945)

I mean right here in *Hansard*, the member from Quill Lakes, and I'm going to put this in every home in his riding, said that this is not a good idea. He lined up with the banks, and he says he's got people in his riding who took the money into the banks. And he says they may never pay it back, and it isn't fair, and farmers don't get . . . Well for Heaven's sake, and this is an NDP'er. The member from Shaunavon, you've got to talk to your colleague here. I mean, this guy is sounding like a capitalist. He's getting right into this. I mean, he's sounding like a banker. He doesn't like this program. Well I don't know.

Mr. Chairman, I can only say that . . . I can only say, Mr. Chairman, that the member, on page 1895, June 11th, said that this is only good for the banks, and it wasn't good for anybody else. His riding didn't like it. Then he lines up with the banks the next week.

I can only say, Mr. Chairman, I don't care what the member from . . . if the member from Quill Lakes says he doesn't think 6 per cent money for farmers is good, or if the bankers don't think that it's good, this government is going to provide 6 per cent money for farmers because the farmer thinks it's good.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Well I'm again very surprised with the Premier. He seems in his appearance a little wild-eyed. I don't know what you've had to eat during supper, but your whole personality has changed. I thought we were going to have just a civil discussion of some of the problems facing agriculture. And somehow you got wound up and you repeat yourself.

I don't know if anybody noticed that here, but you just seem to say the same thing over and over and over again. It's a tremendous repetition. But I'll tell you I know it by heart now. You don't have to say it again . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, before supper he was all right. But I don't know what you had to eat during supper, but you seem a little wild-eyed, and little repetitious. So let us get on to the major question here.

The concern that I have is, here we have your friend, your friend the banker, a major contributor to the Tory party. And look and see at the donations that the bankers give to the Tory party. And he's blasting the farmers. But I'd like to ask you, Mr. Premier . . . here you're bragging in respect to what you've done for the farmers who have built this here province.

But I'll tell you, the grants . . . Do you know what? You give grants to strangers, out-of-province friends who ran for the Tory leadership, like Peter Pocklington. You're prepared to give him grants — no repayments. To the farmers who are hard pressed, the best you can do is a loan, and interest on that loan. But not to Peter Pocklington; you give him straight grants — up to \$10 million.

And I'll tell you the farmers are saying, Mr. Premier, they couldn't fail as a farmer if they had the deal you gave to Weyerhaeuser — that if they didn't make any money, they didn't have to make any payments. I'll tell you, the farmers would like that deal. If they didn't make any payments, and in fact if they went in the hole, if they owed anything, it could be deducted from the amount that they owed to the banks. I'll tell you they would like that deal.

And I say to you, Mr. Premier, the Tories have two standards — for the multinational corporations, and the banks. You know what you people have? You know what you have? You have grants and bail-outs and gifts and give-aways. That's what you have.

And I'll tell you, to the people who built this province, the best that you can do here is to give them a loan, and a short-term loan. And all you have done is not address the major problem of some 36 per cent of the farmers that are in serious trouble, and I'm referring to those 36 per cent that are having basic problems. The \$25, I said, is not going to solve the problem — \$25 program is not going to solve the problem of the 36 per cent of the farmers, the 36 per cent of the farmers of Saskatchewan facing financial difficulty, of which 17 per cent, moderate financial difficulty; 10 per cent are severe; 9 per cent non-viable.

I say that essentially what you are doing is . . . no problem protecting the banks, no problem protecting the oil companies, no problems giving grants and holidays to the oil companies. But when it comes to the farmers, you took

away the property improvement grant and you took away the home quarter education rebate. That's what you stuck to the farmers, but not to the oil companies. And your Tory cousins in Ottawa, they had lots of money, and bang! they had it right away — in the millions, in the billions, to bail out banks and to bail out oil companies — billions. But they don't have it for the farmers.

And so I think, certainly, Mr. Premier, we on this side are ready for an election if you have the nerve to call it. If everything were as you said it and you believe the people believed it, you wouldn't have hesitated, my friend. You would have called an election. But what you have to do is to go around and try to convince again and again, but they won't believe you. There's no credibility. And I'll tell you, with the Weyerhaeuser deal your credibility is finished. People of Saskatchewan say there is no manager — they say there is no manager in charge of Saskatchewan.

And do you know what the legacy you gave the people of Saskatchewan? You gave them \$2 billion on the next generations. That's what the Premier, Grant Devine, gave to the people. Ah, but there is no manager. You gave the oil companies who raped the resources. Of course, of course there's going to be debt when you give it to the special groups like the oil companies.

And let us . . . We are prepared to go to the people of this province and we ask you to have the nerve and the fortitude to go forward and allow the people to be the judge of your actions, of your tenure in office. Because I think that the people of Saskatchewan are ready to turf you out, in spite of all your rhetoric and all your pretence of what you have done.

How can you have a booming society and at the same time indebt the people of this province to the tune of over \$2 billion — \$200 million in payment on interest alone.

An Hon. Member: — How much?

Mr. Koskie: — Two hundred million dollars in interest alone. And more than that, you have increased the taxes massively on the ordinary Saskatchewan people. That's what you have done.

And I'll tell you, take a look at the massive debt, public debt, from \$3.4 billion to \$8.7 billion. That's a great legacy you leave behind. You've been a great manager. And I'll tell you, you're prepared to put this province into any imaginable debt to try to get elected again. That's the danger. And that's why we ask you, Mr. Premier, to come clean, to call an election before you destroy this province any further with the Weyerhaeuser deal and the Pocklington deals.

I'll tell you, that's what the people are asking for — the Premier to have enough nerve to call an election. And you've demonstrated it, you've demonstrated it, Mr. Premier. All of your back-benchers talk to us and they say, we can't get him to go. He's scared. He won't go. And I say to you, Mr. Premier, you can say all you want; that everything is fine here in Saskatchewan. But I'll tell you, put forward your record and see what the people of Saskatchewan will do with you.

And I ask you, Mr. Premier, if all has been so good under your administration, why have we had such an increase in the number of young people that are unemployed? Why have we had the massive increase in the unemployment roll, and on welfare? And why have we so many people now not with full-time, career-oriented jobs, but so many with only part-time jobs.

This is the legacy of the economy that you have left to the people of this province, and surely if you had any confidence, you would well have called the election, Mr. Premier. And certainly you have been in office now the longest time of any government since the Second World War. And it seems to me that you have wasted many opportunities and have indebted the young people of future generations. And I don't really think it's fair . . .

I can only say, Mr. Premier, I don't think you should be very proud of your party, the history of your party, because it only had a short history in this province, and that was the Anderson government back in 1929-34, I believe.

An Hon. Member: — I wasn't even born then.

Mr. Koskie: — Ah, yes, he wasn't even born. But a Tory is a Tory, my friend. A Tory philosophy basically hasn't changed. And when you look at the . . . We had one Tory government, Mr. Premier, and they were afraid to call an election also. And they went for five years, the Anderson government. And do you know what happened, Mr. Premier, when they called the election? They got wiped out completely. There wasn't another Tory to be seen.

And I suggest that you're going to have to wait close to five years, and I suggest the people of Saskatchewan will probably give you much the same type of treatment because you haven't been much better to the people of this province. And the danger as I see it, Mr. Premier, the danger of you continuing in office is that you are so determined at the taxpayers' expense to stay in office that you will, in fact, indeed promise anything and spend any amount of money regardless of the amount of debt that is accumulated on the people of this province. That is the danger.

And so I ask you, Mr. Premier, if indeed you are confident of being re-elected, then there's no need to not, to get, call the election. Don't give us the excuse that you have more on your platter that you have to . . . Well I'll tell you, if you're confident of winning, you can keep that on the platter and get it right after the 28 days. That's what you could do.

And I'll tell you, the business people and the farmers and the working people are saying, call an election, Premier. That's what they're saying. When is he going to call it? Why won't he call it, they say? What answer? I wonder what answer the back-benchers give when they go out or attempt to go out to see their constituents? What kind of an answer do you give when the people say, why won't that Premier call an election? I imagine you have to give some kind of excuse . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . More on the platter all right. I'll say it's more on the platter trying to get elected, but not governing for the welfare of the

people of this province.

And so I say to you, Mr. Premier, the Tories both federally and provincially, we know who you're aligned with — with the banks, the trust companies, the oil companies. You've given \$300 million for four years to the oil companies. Your federal cousins have given billions of dollars to bail out oil companies and banks. Certainly they have. And I'll tell you, when it comes to Saskatchewan people, what you have given is increased taxes, increased debt, and fewer programs. You've cut back in some of the major programs and the social programs . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You have. Well, okay. Think about them, and you have.

And I say to you, Mr. Premier, if you're confident, I ask you to call an election and let's see what the people of Saskatchewan think about your tenure. I'll tell you, Mr. Premier, we're ready. You call it and the people will show you.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the member from Quill says he's ready. I finally figured out why he's getting close to the banks. Evidently, they're \$400,000 in hole. And he wants me to call an election, and he's kind of sidling up to the banks tonight. And he says he agrees with the head of the Royal Bank that this program is no good, and he's trying to sound like a banker because he's \$400,000 in debt and he wants the banks to contribute to his party. And he's sitting there smiling away. This is the first time that he's been able to figure out . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Then he says, I'm not sure people will take advantage of all the programs we've initiated. Well I just took a quick calculation over there. If we take the member from Gravelbourg and we find out — I wonder if he's got access to the 6 per cent money? Well if he did, and I suspect he did, he got \$100,000. The member from Pelly, 15 — 1,600 acres, he probably got about \$40,000. The member from Shaunavon probably could get access to about \$100,000 at 25 per cent. And the former member from Morse probably could get \$100,000 on one, and \$200,000 on two — 53 quarters — I imagine he'd be good for \$200,000. That's \$450,000 a handful of NDPers that picked up already at 6 per cent money. And they're saying, oh the bankers, by gosh, the bankers are saying this is not a good program.

(2000)

Well, Mr. Chairman, I'll tell you what, the member from Quill said, you know you should have called an election earlier. You know, I got calls after my Agriculture estimates, and the member from Quills was up, and what they said after the Agriculture estimates and after he had got finished, they said, you know what, I know why you didn't call the election. You wanted to go through your Agriculture estimates because after those estimates you are likely to win every rural riding in Saskatchewan after the next election. That's what they said, Mr. Chairman, and that will include the rural riding of Quill Lakes.

Well if you want to look at bankruptcies, Mr. Chairman, the bankruptcies in the province of Saskatchewan are

small compared to either our neighbouring provinces. And if you want to get into the history, obviously we can review as I did the other day the Regina Manifesto, where they laid out their whole program: they're against farmers and capitalists and free enterprise; and if it's the last thing they do, that's what they want to do. I won't get into it again, but I'm quite prepared to if the member wants to get into election platforms. If he wants to run on the Regina Manifesto, where everything is in the public sector, we'll be glad to take him on because I believe the phone calls.

In the next election we have a very good possibility of winning every rural riding in Saskatchewan — and yes, Mr. Chairman, and yes to the member of Quill Lakes, I will call an election.

Mr. Koskie: — Well, Mr. Premier, I just want to make one comment in respect to that little dissertation. What I want to say is, I have never seen such arrogance from any premier in my life. Here is a Premier that stands in this legislature and says: because what I have done, every farmer must vote for me. That's what he's saying. He says he's going to win every seat in Saskatchewan, if you can believe it. That's the arrogance of this here Premier — to stand up in this legislature, just because he has a huge majority in the last House, to say now that he's going to win every seat in Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — That's what he said.

Mr. Koskie: — That's exactly what he said. He is telling the people of Saskatchewan, you're going to be voting for me.

Well I'll tell you, there's freedom here yet, and the people of Saskatchewan have been eyeing you up, my friend — they've been eyeing you up. And I'll tell you, not since the days of the Anderson government, because my father told me about the Anderson government, the arrogance of the Anderson government indicating exactly the same arrogance of this Premier.

History repeats itself, they say. And here we have the Premier of this province who has the arrogance to stand in this Assembly and say that, every individual rural and city seat I will win because of my record, instead of going to the people. What arrogance in such a short time.

Here is a man that has never ever entered the Legislative Building before he was elected last time; defeated twice at the polls, rejected this man who is Premier — rejected twice — and now he stands after four years and says he's going to win every seat in Saskatchewan. Well I'll tell you, you keep up the arrogance, my friend, because the people of Saskatchewan are ready for you.

I say to you, Mr. Premier, your arrogance and the arrogance of the other members of your cabinet . . . You say that you have done everything right for the people of Saskatchewan. Well I'll tell you, there are many people out there that don't agree with you. And I say to you, I would ask you to apologize to the people of Saskatchewan for the arrogance that you have displayed here — that you in fact are going to win every seat in Saskatchewan, and you haven't even had the nerve to call

an election in the usual four-year time or less.

Now that is arrogance — arrogance of the worst type. And I'll tell you, Mr. Premier, history will repeat itself and you're going to be a three-time loser.

But you know, some of your leaders have had a great facility of staying on; in fact, some of your members here have run a number of times. They have a sort of a perseverance, but you'd better be ready for perseverance because, I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan are ready for you. Call the election — but I'll tell you, don't tell them how they're going to vote because that's arrogance of the worst type. And I'll tell you, you let the people of Saskatchewan be the judge. Don't you tell them how they're going to vote.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the member from Quill Lakes doesn't like to hear that, after he gets finished Agriculture estimates, everybody in rural Saskatchewan is absolutely convinced that the NDP don't know what they're talking about in agriculture, and that's the case. They threw out the land bank; they threw out the 22 per cent interest rates; they threw out the NDP death tax; and they felt that way in '82 and they feel that way today.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'll tell you that . . . And their research shows, as well, that the people of rural Saskatchewan like to see the protectionism that we have provided against high interest rates; they like to see the 6 per cent money; they like to see all the programs we initiated because the other people didn't.

Now he wants to talk about arrogance. Let me read the views of the organizers of the NDP. This is in the *Commonwealth*, April 30, 1986. And it says this:

The editor: I realize you have problems with the Conservative government, but in one by-election, the Conservatives won the seat. If they are so bad, how come the people voted for and elected the Conservatives? . . . (And this is what the organizers say.) Do you know something, the voters are so damn stupid . . .

That's what the NDP say about the voters: the voters are damn stupid. And then he goes on to say:

So how can anyone possibly educate these lame-brained voters?

This is an NDP organizer, April 30th, in the *Commonwealth*, who is talking about the voters. Do you know what the Leader of the Opposition . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the guy's name happens to be, and I'll find it here — Steve Dediluke is the guy's name, and he's an NDP organizer. You can look it up — April 30, 1986. And he goes on to say:

I am a professional NDP organizer, and I did have a way to change people's minds.

He says, "I have a way to change people's minds."

I believe the main reason why we are more or less at a standstill in the popular vote, maybe gain one

or two per cent . . . which does not help much, is simply because we campaign on issues people are not interested in.

That's what he says that they do. That's an NDP organizer.

And after the last election the NDP leader in Saskatchewan says: do you know what? The voters of Saskatchewan made a mistake. They were wrong. The voters of Saskatchewan made a mistake and they didn't vote for the NDP.

Here's the NDP organizers. They're taught to say this in the *Commonwealth*. They say:

Did you know something, the voters are so damn stupid . . . So how can anybody possibly educate these lame-brained voters?

That's the attitude of the member from Quills; that's the attitude from the member from Shaunavon; that's the attitude of the NDP leader over there. Here's their newspaper — and they publish this; they like this stuff. This is first class for them. They say that the voters are so stupid, and they say that there's no way that we could educate these lame-brain voters. Imagine the arrogance of the NDP, who lost the last election — lost the last election because they didn't help, and they're coming on and saying, oh, the voters are so stupid.

Well, I'll tell you what, Mr. Chairman. We'll put this record on the doors where the NDP say that the voters are stupid and that they are lame-brain and can't be educated, and then the *Commonwealth* will have that editorial all over rural and urban.

Because we listen to people. When people say they want help against 22 per cent interest rates, we respond. When they say they want something better than land bank, we respond. When they say they want a pension program, we respond. When they want venture capital legislation for labour, we respond. When they want shopping hours extended, we react and we respond and we make a commitment, just like the federal government has made a commitment — more commitment and more action in agriculture in an urban and rural than the entire 11 years of the last NDP administration.

I went through the numbers today — the numbers today, and they don't even want to listen to the numbers. Population is up; new jobs are up; economic indicators over the four years, the last four years they were in power. And do you know what they say? Oh, well, the voters were stupid. The voters were so damned stupid, and that they are lame-brained, and it's impossible to educate them.

Well, Mr. Chairman, the NDP can say that the voters are stupid, but we're in a democracy, and we're going to defend the rights and the liberties of individuals in this province. And when we call an election, we'll find out what the people think of the NDP organizers calling people stupid.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yew: — Thank you, Deputy Speaker — Mr. Chairman, pardon me. Mr. Premier, I've looked forward to raising a few questions with you pertaining to the Indian, the Metis, and the non-status people of this province.

I want to read to you a paragraph of a workshop I attended just recently, which I concur with. It relates to Indian, Metis, and non-status people in this province, and throughout Canada. It says in part, and I quote:

After years of paternalism and assimilation policies a growing number of Canadians are recognizing the right of aboriginal people to self-determination. Paternalism has not advanced the interest or served the needs of native people. Attacks on native culture and institutions have harmed native people and have not brought them within the mainstream of our society.

It is important to remember that of all groups within Canada, the native people did not chose the new order but had it imposed upon them. They were already here. However, provincial, federal, national governments' control over all aspects of Indian people's lives have been a fact of life throughout our shared history, Mr. Premier. The national government has always made economic and social decisions for Indian communities that other communities have made locally. Not only has this system of central control been unequal and unjust, it has been grossly inefficient. Other aboriginal people such as the Metis, the Indian, and non-status Indians, have lived in a condition of less than benign neglect, at the mercy of governments foreign to their communities and their culture. The principle of quality demands that they receive a measure of control over their own institutions.

Mr. Premier, I am proud to be on this side of the House . . . such a small opposition. After reviewing five budget presentations by your government and having a government in power going well into five years, I have yet to hear a throne speech presentation or a policy which relates to the position of the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan. And I read to you, Mr. Minister:

That the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan unequivocally endorses the principles of Indian, Metis, and non-status self-government for Canada's aboriginal people.

Just the other day, Mr. Premier, I was doing estimates with the Minister for Indian and Metis, pardon me, Indian and — he calls his department Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat. I was pleased with some of the information that he provided; there is some information that is still forthcoming.

(2015)

But I look at the information that was provided, Mr. Minister, and I see before me issues after issues that have been neglected by your administration, by the Devine PC government. The issues before me, and the issues that I have . . . but specifically talking about issues that are raised by northern organizations, elected officials,

various interest groups, fishermen, trappers, wild rice growers, northern outfitters, and other construction workers; and in general, people of Indian, Metis ancestry raised 87 issues, Mr. Premier — 87 issues. And they relate, Mr. Premier, to the social, political, and economic advances and aspirations that they desire, much the same as those that are desired by the other people that are not Indians throughout Canada.

Your policies, Mr. Premier, in the course of my term of office, have not resolved nor even tried to resolve the issues confronting the people that are at the lowest scale of our social and economic mainstream of society. You have not. You preach God, love, family -slogans of that sort, Mr. Premier. But when it comes right down to it, you don't practise what you preach. You have a double standard.

Mr. Premier, in my upbringing, I considered people in the Legislative Assembly and people in parliament and people in churches with high regard, because I was raised that way. But upon my experience here in this legislature, Mr. Premier, that regard has diminished somewhat.

When I watch your performance, when I watch the performance of the PC Devine government, when I see the lack of compassion that you have for people, the ordinary working families in this province, for people of different ethnic minority backgrounds — and in relation to my critic area as Indian, Metis, and non-status Indian critic for the small opposition party that we have over on this side of the House — I want to say to you, and I concur with the minister, the member for P.A.-Duck Lake, that you have no commitment, no commitment whatsoever. I have met with the native organizations and I have met with various interest groups and the people in my constituency, and the same thing applies over there.

You mentioned a moment ago that you will win every rural riding, Mr. Premier. Let me assure you that there will be two rural ridings that will definitely not go with you.

I look at the revenues generated from the top half of our province. And there are a tremendous amount of millions and millions and millions of dollars generated from the top half of this province. And the people in the North are asking for a fair share of those resources. They're not asking for 50 per cent, 40 per cent, 30 per cent, 10 per cent, or whatever. They're asking for jobs. They're asking that welfare dependency rates be cut down. I told the member for P.A.-Duck Lake that the native people in the provincial jails have increased as compared to all the total population. The people of native ancestry, Indian, Metis, and non-status people in the male provincial jails have gone up. When the former minister for Lumsden-Qu'Appelle held the office of Justice, that figure was 63 per cent. Now with the new minister for the Department of Justice that figure has increased by 64 per cent to date. And I look at the women's institutions in terms of the total population. That figure today is 84 per cent native.

Now, Mr. Premier, does that tell you something — that there is and has never been a commitment on your part to do what is fair and what is right for the people of native ancestry, for the Indian, the Metis, and non-status Indians

of this province?

I asked the minister for the Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat, which I call the Indian, Metis, and non-status Indian affairs department, a question that relates to . . . And I'll ask you the same, Mr. Minister. Can you tell me, Mr. Premier, can you please advise me where you stand on the issue of native self-government, native self-determination?

You've attended a good number of conferences in Ottawa, and I've heard of your performance. And I've heard that Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia have not endorsed nor have made any commitment towards the aboriginal people of this province.

I look at the Saskatchewan Native Economic Development Corporation program. The feds have given \$9.1 million to try to boost, to try to establish . . . If the member for P.A.-Duck Lake wants to get into the debate, you'll have your opportunity. I'm debating with the Premier. You've had your day already. I wish you'd clam up for a while and let the Premier listen to what I have to say because that's going to be his last opportunity. When he gets the courage, the nerve, to call a provincial election he's going to be going back to Estevan for good.

I ask you, Mr. Premier: there were good proposals submitted to you by the native organizations, proposals that would work. The federal government put in and committed \$9.1 million. The province was supposed to have committed itself to \$4.1 million. But the minister for Indian and Native Affairs says no; there's no way I'm going to put any money to that program — no way.

I want to ask you, Mr. Premier: what commitments, what understanding, what is your position on the issues confronting the aboriginal people of this province and throughout Canada?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we have taken some relatively straightforward positions regarding Indian economic development and self-government.

I would like to point out to the hon. member who talks about funds in northern Saskatchewan: I don't know of many native people who would like to see the mines closed in northern Saskatchewan. And I know that the member from Athabasca, for example, is very, very adamant and he fights a great deal in the NDP caucus with respect to closing of the uranium mines.

I don't want to close them. Obviously people are employed; it generates money and income, economic activity. But the NDP policy is to close all the mines in northern Saskatchewan, putting thousands of people out of work. And so the member from Cumberland can stand here and say, well for Heaven's sakes, what's your policy with respect to northern Saskatchewan? Well, I'll tell you what it isn't. It isn't closing the uranium mines.

So, Mr. Chairman, when we're looking at sound economic development packages, and take advantage of the North with respect to gold mining, uranium mining, tourism, wild rice, economic development, forestry . . . I mean, all day today they were talking about, they're

against the new forestry agreement; they don't like that. They're obviously against tourism. They didn't want to do anything about that.

They didn't encourage anything with respect to opening up new uranium mines now that they're not in power. I mean, they were all prepared to nationalize the world when they were there. Now they want to close it. I mean, they have been on every side of every issue you can think of today. Trade — they're on both sides; they're for the banks and against the banks.

I want to just point out to the members opposite, because they were asking about financial contributions; and I'm going to raise this with them because here's . . . It's just been published in the Western Report. It's called "Beer Bucks."

Breweries and distilleries are the big NDP donors. (And it goes on to say that) James Scheaffer Woodsworth, the first leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, was a teetotaler. His staunch abstinence, however, has had little impact upon the corporate donation policy of the new CCF-NDP democratic descendants in Manitoba.

In fact (it goes on to say — and I'm just putting this on for the record) breweries and distillers have emerged as the party's big contributors in 1985. (And it goes on to say:) Of the NDP's 76 contributing companies, brewers and distillers are among the most generous.

And it lists them. Molson Companies were \$2,187; Joseph Seagram and Sons, \$2,000; John Labatt Ltd., \$2,000 (to the NDP); Schenley Canada Inc., \$1,000; Potter Distilleries Ltd., 750; the London Winery Limited, \$300; and the Reider Distillery, 250.

And here, Mr. Chairman, is another interesting surprise . . .

Mr. Chairman: —Order, please. Order, please. It's getting a little noisy in here. I would ask hon. members to please quieten down so we can hear the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, another surprise here in this editorial, and it's right that:

James (Jim) Wright, past chairman of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and owner of Assiniboia Downs (and it was interesting to note that now the member from Quill was trying to sidle up to the chamber of commerce) donated \$593.

So the liquor companies and distilleries and the race track owners are contributing to the NDP as we see in . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I wonder what we can do, because they're \$400,000 in the hole, so they're sidling up to the banks a little bit and sidling up to the breweries. And for the last two or three times in the House, they've been obviously against beer and distillers and Molsons and all the rest. Well, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to put that on the record so the member from the Quill Lakes would be quite well aware of the fact that the

rest of the country knows indeed where the NDP are getting their money.

We obviously support uranium development in northern Saskatchewan because it employs people in northern Saskatchewan. I believe that's important. The Government of Saskatchewan supports the needs for Indian people to exercise wider autonomy in decision making, particularly at the community level, and I have stated that position time and time again at the first ministers' conference.

The Saskatchewan government suggested a combination of an accord amendment that would have committed governments to practical self-government initiatives with local or provincial aboriginal people, and it would have provided a mechanism for the constitutional protection of self-government agreements.

(2030)

If you look at the kinds of economic activities that we've participated in northern Saskatchewan, I'd just like to point out a few, Mr. Chairman. We have the Northern Economic Development Subsidiary Agreement that identified a number of priorities for northern Saskatchewan. It was agreed to on August of 1984, and this five-year, \$36 million cost-shared agreement is aimed at enhancing long-term employment prospects in northern Saskatchewan.

We have, second, the Athabasca hydroelectric transmission line. The NDP were in power for a long time and never thought of it and never did. And one of the side effects of the 1982 Beaverlodge mine closure in Uranium City was that three hydroelectric generating stations in the area became redundant. We are putting 40 to \$50 million in this project which will create jobs and economic activity and provide lower priced utilities, like electricity to people of northern Saskatchewan.

We have a third project, mineral surface leases. One of the responsibilities of the secretariat is to make sure that we develop mining in northern Saskatchewan. We have a minor and in some cases a relatively significant gold boom going on in northern Saskatchewan, and obviously exploration is one of the things the native population can be involved in, in an intimate fashion.

We have the Northern Development Advisory Council, Mr. Chairman. It was formed on November 30 of 1985. It's an 11-member body and has a mandate to promote northern economic development. We have done several things with respect to wild rice, with respect to tourism, economic development.

And finally just let me point out with respect to the whole question of the forestry management in northern Saskatchewan — people that want to work in the bush have asked governments for years and years and years to allow the individual farmer and the small operator, whether he is native or non-native, to be able to participate. And we have provided for the first time a comprehensive package to allow for a major economic activity to take place in a new forestry management arrangement. We'll be doing that with a new paper-mill,

a new pulp-mill. Farmers, small-business operators, native and non-native alike, will for the first time have opportunities in force that they haven't had for years.

So, when you look at mining, gold, and uranium exploration, tourism, forestry, wild rice, economic development advisory councils, and the changes and recommendations that we have made at the national level, Mr. Chairman, I would be quite glad to defend our economic record and promotion of self-government at any time with respect to people across northern Saskatchewan, and compared with any place else in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yew: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I want to say to you, Mr. Premier.

(At this point the hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

I'll interpret it for you if you want to. But I'll tell you, the people out there listening to television, the estimate . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. Order, please. We're trying to hear what he said, but a couple of members aren't allowing us to do it.

Mr. Yew: — (At this point the hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

I ask you, Mr. Premier, if you have any commitments like the members on this side of the House. Does your party, Mr. Premier, unequivocally endorse the principle of self-government for the Indian, the Metis and non-status people of this province, and Canada's aboriginal people?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, just let me make the point. We were quite prepared to see a major move towards self-government, particularly starting with the status Indian and the Inuit because they know exactly where their land base is, and they're quite prepared to accept it.

The difficulty, as I've raised it at the national conventions, is that you have a broad range of native and Indian, Metis people. And it's quite one thing to say for the Inuit to have self-government — community self-government, local self-government in the major parts of the Northwest Territories. It's quite another thing to say that somebody's living on Winnipeg Street who claims that they want to have self-government, and side-by-side somebody is not native. They go to the same church, play in the same baseball team, involved in the same community function, and you're saying well, all right you can have some self-government, but your neighbour can't; or you're going to have some combination, and that's much more complex.

So what I said is that, let's look at native self-government, if you will, in the aboriginal sense where you have status Indians; where you know exactly where the property is and it's easily understood and so forth. And I had support for that.

When you make it broader, when you get into the Metis in

down-town urban environments, it's much more complex. And I said I think we need some time to be able to resolve those, work them out. And I have discussed with AMNSIS and every other group that is in Saskatchewan about the various combinations of things that you can do. So it's not easy — and I'm sure the hon. member knows — to talk about self-government in down-town Regina for a separate group of individuals. And if he's got some suggestions I'd like to hear them, but obviously we've had many negotiations.

So we've looked at the combination and the range. When we put them all together at the same time, Indian and native people are telling me we're not all the same, and we cannot be treated all the same. We come from different circumstances and live in different environments, and I agree with that. So they have to be treated with respect and with the dignity that they deserve, and respect for their individual characteristics and their individual environment. And I believe that's the right action, which means some will be settled before others.

I don't think that there's any way that we can put them all in the same pot or even think that they should be, or settle them all at the same time, but let's look at, as they suggest: if you have aboriginal rights, if you have Inuit situations, if you have status Indians on reserves, if you have non-status and Metis in major urban environments, that's a different problem, and I'm quite prepared to address it, and I have to date and I will continue in the future.

Mr. Yew: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members on your cabinet asked me a moment ago to describe briefly what I meant by my question, Mr. Premier. I look at native self-determination, native self-government as having a land base, an economic base, Mr. Minister. And I have a brochure here which is from a united group of aboriginal people, and in part this is what they're saying:

We must have political development and the recognition of basic political rights that are fundamental to the objective of all aboriginal people in Canada.

Another quote, Mr. Premier, indicates that institutions that allow aboriginal people to share in decision-making authority with governments must be established to manage wildlife, land, fresh water, etc. And finally, Mr. Premier, comprehensive land claim settlements and agreements must give aboriginal people more political control, not only over land and resources, but over economic development of those resources as well.

Mr. Premier, in northern Saskatchewan we have unemployment ranging up to 90 to 100 per cent. We have massive welfare dependency rates in the North. All of a sudden, you know, you didn't recognize the fact that many of our communities are isolated and are not accessible to lower food prices and commodities that we in cities like Regina or Saskatoon have.

You cancelled the food and transportation subsidy to Wollaston Lake, Mr. Premier. Just a mere \$250,000 program, and you turn around and give Manalta Coal of Alberta, a corporation, a \$145 million loan guarantee;

and again, the other Alberta oil company, you gave \$390 million loan guarantee as well; and just the other day you gave another millionaire from Alberta \$21 million, 11 of which is a loan guarantee and 10 million of which, Mr. Premier, has not got to be paid back. It's just an outrageous grant to a person, a wealthy, powerful individual in Alberta who does not need \$10 million grants.

Why don't you recognize the people that are in need, the needy people in this province, the people that need jobs? I've met dozens of them in Regina. I didn't know anybody in Regina, but fortunately enough the proceedings of this House are now televised. They can recognize you and I. They can recognize members who are fighting against the working people in this province. They can recognize the members who are against the ordinary families in this province. They can recognize the members, the PC government on that side of the House, who are fighting the ordinary people in this province and giving away our assets to multinational corporations like Weyerhaeuser — \$248 million worth of assets.

I tell you, Mr. Premier, we are not against development. You talked about uranium just a moment ago. Well I want to tell you, Mr. Premier, we had when we went into major development, in any major development, in any major piece of legislation that involved Northerners, we had, Mr. Premier, public inquiries all over this province. And you have not had one on the Weyerhaeuser deal, not on. The people of northern Saskatchewan . . . You are giving away the forestry rights, some 7, closer to 8 million acres of land, prime forest resource, for 30 years — or perhaps that will change the face of the North for ever — without even consulting, Mr. Premier, without consulting anyone in northern Saskatchewan.

You have not consulted the elected officials, the villages, the hamlets, the various communities I just mentioned. Mr. Premier, I ask you: have you been to Wollaston Lake? Have you been to Sturgeon Landing? Have you been to Sucker River? Have you been to Jans Bay? Have you visited Pinehouse? The president of the forestry moratorium committee which is against herbicide spraying, George Smith, lives in Pinehouse, and he has a large gathering. Have you consulted with the people of the North? You are, Mr. Premier, avoiding to meet the public. You are avoiding to meet the people in this province, and you have neglected and abandoned and ignored the northern people.

Mr. Premier, in all sincerity, that resource is valuable to us in northern Saskatchewan as well as it is to the rest of this province. You generate a lot of resource revenue from the North, Mr. Premier, and that's fine, but let's keep that North intact. Let's not do it the way you're doing it. You are giving away our resources; you're giving away to a multinational corporation — a bad deal for the people of this province and particularly for the people of the North.

Many, many people in the southern areas of this province go to northern Saskatchewan, in the areas like Waskesiu, Lac la Ronge, Southend-Reindeer Lake, Dore Lake, and the far northern regions like Uranium City, to visit a natural environment, a natural environment where they can relax and enjoy nature.

And the people of northern Saskatchewan, the Indian, the Metis, and non-status people of this province rely on the traditional way of life to this point in time because you have not committed yourself to native self-determination and native self-government. You have not created a land base for the people of native ancestry. You have not created an economic land base; you have not developed any major initiatives to help alleviate the high unemployment rates in the North. You have not created anything to help alleviate the high welfare dependency rates.

(2045)

You look at the statistics of the Department of Justice, and you'll see you've got more Indians, more Metis and non-status people in your jails in this province than any other ethnic group. Now doesn't that tell you something, Mr. Premier?

Mr. Premier, we rely on the North, and we'd like to keep it as natural an environment as possible. We are not against development, but let's do it the correct way. Let's give to the people of this province some public participation, public involvement, and public decision-making.

You called one of my colleagues on this side of the House a capitalist just a moment ago, or something close to that effect. Well I'll tell you who the capitalist is today, Mr. Premier. You are the capitalist; you are the capitalist because people like yourself dictate the terms of any agreement related to the people in this province. You dictated the terms with Weyerhaeuser behind closed doors.

We're into session now; we're into legislative session to scrutinize policies, programs, and legislation, and major agreements like Weyerhaeuser and also the Peter Pocklington deal. But thus far, Mr. Premier, the PC government of this province is really a disappointment and a dismal failure to all the people in this province. That is the reason, Mr. Premier, that you're not calling an election. That's the only reason. You're running scared. In Cree, Mr. Premier, we have a word for people like yourself.

An Hon. Member: — What is it?

Mr. Yew: — *Wapush*. That's what you are, and it's just very appropriate.

An Hon. Member: — I'm sorry. Can you tell me what that means?

Mr. Yew: — The member for Moosomin wants to know what it is. Well I'll tell the member for Moosomin out of courtesy, so that the Premier will have the opportunity to hear what it is. Mr. Premier, you are a rabbit. Rabbits come in cycles. You guys come in 50-year cycles. When you have the nerve and the courage to call a provincial election, you'll be wiped out another 50 years. And the people of this province, the electorate in this province will be the ones with the pea shooters to make darn sure that you end up in Estevan for good . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . They haven't promoted you. That's too

bad, Larry — promoted you to any cabinet post. In fact, you're not running again.

I asked, Mr. Premier, the member for P.A.-Duck Lake whether or not your government would commit itself to 4.1 million to the native economic development agency program, to fund the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation. And you said no; we were elected to look after the taxpayers' dollars ... (inaudible interjection) ... You were. That's what your statement was, Mr. Member for P.A.-Duck Lake. But you know what he told me? He said no. He said, we're looking after the taxpayers' dollars.

But you know what has happened, Mr. Premier? You have mismanaged the economy of this province to the tune of well over \$2 billion. We are now paying the banks and the bond deals, in interest payment alone, well over \$200 million a year — \$200 million a year that could go towards economic job creation, economic development, and job creation for the people in northern Saskatchewan. Instead, Mr. Premier, we are standing here today with a deficit of well over \$2 billion, and for every man, woman, and child in this province, we owe well over \$2,000 annually just on the principal and interest alone. A family of four owes \$8,000.

Mr. Premier, when the member for P.A.-Duck Lake responded to me by saying, we were elected to look after the taxpayers' dollars, I'm sure that the people of this province didn't agree with him. Now when your government has decided to put this province in the red for well over \$2 billion, people in this province will know the facts of your administration, the priorities of your administration.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, in terms of the Weyerhaeuser agreement, will you or will you not have a major environmental impact assessment — public hearings — or will you not? Before that deal is signed, will you not meet with the people of northern Saskatchewan and people throughout the province to provide them with the detailed information and the terms of reference, clause by clause, of what form of an agreement that your government is prepared to sign if you have not signed already? You have provided the members on this side of the House with very vague information pertaining to the Weyerhaeuser deal ... (inaudible interjection) ... What did the member for Meadow Lake say? ... (inaudible interjection) ... They are more important.

The member for Meadow Lake asks me whether or not I'll be attending a stampede in Meadow Lake. Well, Mr. Minister, I'm sorry to say but we are in discussion over very serious matters here, very serious matters. If you want to take those issues that I've related to the Premier just as lightly as to suggest a stampede, that's fine, you can attend. That's your riding. That's your home community, but I'm prepared to stay here and debate with the Premier on issues of importance to the ordinary working families in this province and the people that are in need.

Since your PC government took office, Mr. Premier, we have had nothing but soup kitchens and food banks. And once again, I want to ask you, Mr. Premier, when your government signed the Canada-Saskatchewan subsidiary

agreement on northern economic development dated the 31st day of August 1984, when then, Mr. Minister — when the former minister for northern affairs put his signature on that agreement — why can you not honour that agreement by putting money into the Saskatchewan Native Economic Development Corporation so that they can begin building some initiatives aimed at alleviating the high welfare dependency rates, the high incarceration of native people in our jails, and the high unemployment in northern Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the environmental review associated with the paper-mill and pulp-mill and the new economic activity, I can assure the hon. member that we will be doing the normal environmental review and impact studies that are necessary, as we do with power projects, as we do with upgraders, or various other kinds of projects that we build.

Regarding some assistance to northern Saskatchewan. I think he mentioned \$270,000. I can only say to the member that three days of operation of the pulp-mill, three days, if we could get out from under the debt, would pay for all your subsidies — \$91,000 a day the taxpayer is losing and it's been doing that for five years, and he's talking about a subsidy in northern Saskatchewan.

Two projects that I can suggest that are in the multimillion dollars: uranium, and the member opposite wants to close all the mines and all those losses and what it would mean. He talks about \$270,000. He's talking about millions and hundreds of millions he just wants to wipe out with the stroke of a pen. He didn't mention that. And secondly, the pulp-mill, which his administration got the public into for \$350 million. What we lose daily, \$91,000 — three days of that loss, that hemorrhaging, would pay for all the subsidies that he wants.

So he takes two major investments by the NDP — the uranium business and the pulp business. And if you put those two together you'd have enough money to finance northern economic development for decades and decades.

So I would say, we're trying to maintain money and a healthy economy with respect to uranium exports into the United States. Number two, we're trying to stop the hemorrhaging in the pulp business so that we don't lose \$91,000. And if we could touch another one, potash industry, they borrowed \$650 million from U.S. bankers and we're still paying it back, plus the interest. We could have had well over a billion dollars in the Heritage Fund to help all kinds of people.

If you take the potash industry and the pulp business and the uranium business, and put it together in terms of the, as I call it, the economic apartheid practices that the members across the way practise ... They blacklist anybody in the private sector, put it all in the public sector, lose all kinds of money, and then blame me because they're losing money with respect to these public investments that don't make it.

So I would be glad ... I've went through and I've gone through and I will continue to go through the new

proposals for northern Saskatchewan. We don't have a jack pine curtain any longer; it's knitted into the entire province. It's part and parcel of the entire economic development package for north and south, so that we're all one — health care, agricultural, tourism, mining, and so forth. And that is popular and I will continue on that.

And I'll tell you, I'll continue to move towards a new forestry management agreement, a new paper-mill, a new integrated pulp-mill. I will continue mining and I will continue uranium mining, and I will make sure, wherever possible, that we encourage private investment here because it helps make profits which helps pay taxes, which helps build roads and build schools and hospitals and so forth.

I don't know where the hon. member thinks we get our money from, but it's from people making money in the private sector. That's why you tax them. And if he doesn't like the private sector, then he comes from a different school — and so be it. We could argue philosophy. I don't believe that losing \$91,000 a day by having the pulp-mill in the public sector is a good thing for taxpayers or anybody else. Now he may like it, but there's an awful lot of people that don't. And I can read to him, as I read to others, the newspaper in Prince Albert, the chamber of commerce in Prince Albert, people in Meadow Lake, everybody that thinks what we're doing is absolutely the right thing to do; as well as in the city of Regina, Saskatoon.

I'll go door to door with you if you want to talk about closing uranium mines. People don't want to close uranium mines, but that's your policy. And I'll go door to door with you with respect to if you think it's a good idea to pay U.S. bankers millions and tens of millions of dollars of interest when we could be doing it ourselves with Canadian money — and that's your policy.

So quite clearly, the people have seen your policies and have rejected them. And your economic policy for northern Saskatchewan, with closing all the pulp-mills, closing the uranium mines and having losses, obviously wouldn't help. So I haven't heard of an idea you suggested this evening that makes very much sense in terms of economic development. You want \$270,000 in subsidies. Well, as I said, three days closing of the pulp-mill — three days closing of the pulp-mill. If we can fix that, and you'd have it; and you've had five years of \$91,000 a day, and I never heard you mention it — not once.

What about all your people in northern Saskatchewan? Have you told them that the government loses \$91,000 a day on a pulp-mill that's no good in terms of its financing? I think to be fair you should tell your constituents that. You tell them that. You tell them you're going to close all the uranium mines. You tell them you're against business and the private sector and tourism coming in. You tell them that you're against the private sector getting into farming in terms of wild rice. You tell them you're against god mining.

I don't know why you don't tell them all those things. I don't know what you do tell them, but it isn't the facts. Because if they had the facts, then they'd be quite aware

of the fact that we are losing hundreds of thousands of dollars a day because of practices and policies that the NDP got into when they were in power. And it will take us decades to get out from under the mess that your administration got this province in.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2100)

Mr. Yew: — Mr. Premier, we made money from PAPCO. In 1980-81 we made \$24 million; in '82-83, \$27 million. We had figures in here just the other day indicating that that corporation had made money.

The reason why we're losing money under your administration, Mr. Premier, is the fact that — we had it during question period, read a letter from a firm in Manitoba re the sale of timber from PAPCO, the promoting in the management of such by the minister responsible for that area, the member for Meadow Lake — was the fact that you did not encourage and promote the sale and the marketing of our products. Isn't that one of the reasons why the mill is losing now?

You simply, Mr. Premier, your philosophy and mine are completely different. You talk about selling our resources and our assets to firms outside of this province.

An Hon. Member: — Giving it away.

Mr. Yew: — Giving it away, is more appropriate. And you also give away major assets, such as the deal we're talking about, to a firm from Washington, Weyerhaeuser Ltd. from Tacoma.

Why, Mr. Premier, aren't you looking at assisting small business in this province? Let them initiate job creation and a better economy for the province of Saskatchewan, rather than giving it to firms that will probably have all sorts of "no trespassing" signs in the northern administration district, in the top half of our province — signs that will indicate to us that the United States of America now owns Saskatchewan. That is what's going to happen.

For 30 years, Mr. Premier, the trappers, the fishermen, the people that live the traditional life, the only form of income that they have is from trapping and commercial fishing from the natural environment of the North, will now be excluded or fenced out from those resources. You talk about tourism on one hand and then you turn around and try to over-exploit the last remaining frontier in this province. I can't understand the mentality of your government.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I know that the hon. member is against a new paper-mill. I'm for it. I suspect we can agree to disagree. We want to see the new development and he would rather see the government own it. There's a difference of philosophy, so maybe we could just agree to say that he would do it his way and I would do it mine, and let it go at that.

Mr. Yew: — Mr. Premier, I am not against development. I mentioned it before and I believe the member for

P.A.-Duck Lake knows that.

What we did, Mr. Premier, when we talked about major developments is we had public information meetings. With the people that are directly affected as well as the rest of the province, we had public consultation, public involvement, public participation into the Cluff Lake uranium mine, into the Key Lake uranium mine, into the establishment of the department of northern Saskatchewan, into the establishment of the northern municipal council, and for the establishment of a Northern Municipalities Act. We held public meetings.

But, Mr. Premier, on the part of the PC government, the Devine government of this province, we have yet to see public information meetings held throughout the province before you decide. You are trying to run this agreement — shaft it down the throats of people throughout this province, and particularly the people on the top half of the province without even consulting them as to what the terms of reference are pertaining to the agreement. That is what you're doing.

We held meetings, and we initiated major economic development initiatives in northern Saskatchewan. And when we were in office, when the New Democrats were in office, we didn't have the high unemployment rate that we have today — not under our administration we didn't. We held public information meetings to decide and to analyse the type of projects, the type of economic activity that was being proposed.

But as far as you're concerned, Mr. Premier, your PC government is still arrogant and more, perhaps, insensitive to the needs of the people of this province, and to the needs of the people that will be directly affected by this major give-away, this major deal with Weyerhaeuser of Tacoma, Washington.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, just to correct the hon. member, we have had cabinet committee hearings on farm input costs; we have had trade hearings; we have had water hearings; we've had educational hearings on core curriculum; we've got the Northern Development Advisory Council that we have held hearings; and we've had health care hearings. And all the time, Mr. Chairman, the NDP members criticized the cabinet committee hearings, the trade hearings, the water hearings, the core curriculum hearings and so on.

And I mean, we have hearings all the time; we have public participation. And, Mr. Chairman, when you want the public involved, they're never had an opportunity like they have now to buy power bonds, to buy oil bonds, to buy shares and participate in the Crown corporations, and our whole new forestry management agreement is to have the little person, the small operator, and the farmer involved. And the NDP didn't like that. I mean, they had to have the government.

It's the old economic apartheid, blacklist the private sector, that they keep pulling the wool over the people's eyes. They'll go out there to all the little people and say, oh, we're for you. And as soon as they get in power it's not for them, it's for the government, and the government is not the same as the people. The individual little farmer

and that small operator and those entrepreneurs, they are not government.

Do you know the reason . . . You know the NDP right now criticize us for advertising. Every government will advertise. It wasn't that you can't advertise. It was the philosophy of the NDP that you had to advertise the Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations as some holy instrument, some holy philosophical instrument; that the public Crown corporation, the government, would run your life, and not the individual.

And the members opposite can turn their backs and they can look the other way, but that is at the root of what the member is talking about. They believe in economic apartheid; they believe in economic segregation. They don't believe at all in the little individual. They don't believe in protecting home owners against 22 per cent interest rate.

They don't believe in farmers owning their land because they offered land bank. They don't believe in small operators being in the bush; they never let them in the bush. And people all across northern Saskatchewan will tell you that small operators could not be in the bush, and are they ever happy with this new policy. They don't want it run out of Regina. They want it run out of their homes, their farms and their small businesses.

So real families — I'll tell you, they've come to our cabinet committees on trade and water and farm land and input costs, on core curriculum and our hearings with respect to environment, and we will continue to have them.

But the problem with the member opposite is that somebody got a hold of him when he was young, or whatever, and taught him economic apartheid. He got it pumped into his head that every small business and operator was a capitalist and a free-enterpriser and by definition was wicked and deserved to be blacklisted. And you believe that. You believe that.

Well I'll tell you what, Mr. Chairman, there's a different philosophical view about what built this country. Governments didn't build this country, people did, families did, farmers did and traders did, and trappers and fishermen. And they didn't have it all run out of Regina. They did it because they believed in doing things with their own hands and developing their family businesses and their enterprises. Now that doesn't mean the government runs it.

Where in the world did you ever get it figured out that if the government runs it, it's good for the people? It's not. The people of northern Saskatchewan will tell you that it isn't. We've had government involvement north of the jack pine curtain for as long as we can remember, and it didn't create any sort of sound economic development. And now when they're in opposition, they want to close the mines, and they're against paper-mills, and against pulp-mills, and against economic developments.

They believe, philosophically believe, in economic apartheid. You blacklist the private sector and you put them on one side, and anybody that's working in the

public sector, they're special. Advertise it through Crown corporations, spend all that money, and then it'll be good for the people. Well look at, you can sell that if you like. You might be successful for a few people, but I'll tell you, the folks in Saskatchewan are not going to be fooled again. They learned their lesson. They learned the kind of philosophical arguments that you had before and that you did not deliver, and you built up losses upon losses upon losses.

We would have a surplus in this province, even under the current economic conditions, if you hadn't bought and borrowed all the resources from New York bankers and saddled this province and this people with debt into the United States. The member opposite worries about people from United States investing here. What does he do? He takes his people's money and he sends it to New York and to Wall Street to pay for a big debt, and we already had it. Imagine! He had to buy back the mines that were already ours that we already had control of, and send the money to New York and pay the interest on the U.S. dollar as if that was good for him in La Ronge. How does he think it's good for La Ronge to be paying all that money to New York?

What we're saying is, having people from New York take that money and put it in here so we can use it, and we will build roads and hospitals and pulp-mills and paper-mills with their money so we can have economic development. What does he want to do? He wants to nationalize it and pay them.

I suppose, Mr. Chairman, next thing he'll say, well he'll buy back the roads. He could buy back the lake. He could buy back the trees. I'll bet you we could buy back the trees, and we could borrow money from the United States and buy our trees back and pay them for that. Well, your economic logic is not very sound, my friend. If you want to look at the kinds of things that we're prepared to do, we obviously have a difference in philosophy. I believe in the private sector, I believe in the farmer, the fisherman, the fur trader and all those people who want to run their own life, and I do not think that everything north of Saskatoon should be run out of Regina or in government.

We set the environment, and I believe that more and more people — as you see in the P.A. paper and the Meadow Lake paper and the Nipawin paper and the La Ronge paper — are saying, I want to see some individual initiative; I want to see small operators in the bush; I want to see farmers involved in the bush; and I want to see a good private sector forestry arrangement, so that we can look forward to long-run economic activity in northern Saskatchewan.

I agree with that; you may not. You don't understand economic development the same way I do — fair enough. I'm not sure that you understand a debenture; I'm not sure that you understand paying for things that we already own. Maybe you were taught that way, but obviously we have a difference, and we'll let it go at that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yew: — Mr. Premier, I did not have the opportunity that you have in terms of education. And I want to tell you

and the other members of this House that my education has only been to grade 4, but I can debate with you with regards to northern issues any day, any time, any week, any month, any year — whenever you please.

I know what the people of the North are thinking. And I tell you, Mr. Premier, we were the ones — when the New Democrats were in power — we were the ones that initiated major initiatives up there, but we did so after consultation, after public meetings.

I remember a meeting October 27, 1977 and '78 — the Bayda inquiry — where we went to the locally-elected officials throughout the northern administration district, and we met the native organizations and the special interest groups, and we confronted them with the question. But the Justice minister, Edward Bayda . . . Oh, pardon me, he was the man appointed to head this major inquiry. We didn't ram it down the throats of people; we consulted with them. I remember those days very distinctly because I was the chairman of the northern municipal council. And I said to the people, we will see what the terms are, what there is in terms of job security, what the conditions are in terms of training and safety. And it took us a fairly long time, but the final end result of that inquiry was that the people decided to vote in favour of the uranium industry at Cluff Lake. And following that major inquiry, we initiated another one — the Key Lake inquiry, and the people then were also involved.

(2115)

But you're telling me that I'm against development, Mr. Minister. Mr. Premier, I'm telling you, I'm not against development. We need the jobs. I'd sooner work for a living. My family would be proud of me to earn a living rather than to go humbly to the member for Rosedale, is it — Rosemont — the Minister of Social Services and go begging for him for a welfare cheque that is totally inadequate in order for my family to survive.

Mr. Premier, many of my people have had to eat porridge three times a day. Sometimes, when I grew up, I had to go into the bush in order to feed myself. I had to pick blueberries to fill up my stomach because I was hungry. That is the kind of capitalist system I am against.

Today, Mr. Premier, we gave Peter Pocklington over there which you gave \$21 million to, 10 of which he doesn't have to pay back. It's an outright grant. And he's got the working people against him. Alberta is wanting to kick him out; they've asked him to leave Alberta because he won't give a decent wage increase to the working people in that province. There's a whole lot of controversy, and I'm sure you know about that controversy.

And again, when you want to talk about capitalism, I look at Weyerhaeuser. Weyerhaeuser is now in a controversy by itself. His workers, he's chopped back some \$4-an-hour wage increments, and he's in trouble with his own labour, with his own workers. He comes North, and the northern people don't know what the deal is, the type of deal, or the type of give-away that you're initiating. How can you say, Mr. Premier, that the people of the

North and the people in this province will benefit? How can you say that?

If the mill is losing \$91,000 a day, Mr. Premier, I'll tell you we are losing money as well because of your incentives and give-aways to people like Peter Pocklington; people that are wealthy and well off. That is why we are losing money. That is why we're \$2 billion in the red — because of misplaced priorities, because of a lack of compassion for the needy.

Mr. Premier, you're on your way out as soon as you can get the nerve to call an election. You will not be on that side of the House, I can assure you that. There will be other members on that side of the House, and the members on that side of the House will consist of New Democrats.

You ask the pollsters to date where you stand, and I'll tell you that is the reason why you're afraid to call a general election. You're afraid because the few members we have on this side of the House have handled you for five years. You have not been able to intimidate guys like me, with a grade 4 education, and the colleagues beside me. We have stuck in unity, in unity not only amongst ourselves, but in unity with the rest of the people in this province. We have garnered their support. And you go to the pollsters and they'll tell you the same thing.

Mr. Premier, your time is up. It was up some months ago. but by law — I didn't know that — but by law I guess you can go five. But I challenge you to call an election whenever you have the courage to do so. I'll tell you, when we get into power, we recognize the high unemployment that is in this province. We recognize the high welfare dependency rates in this province. We recognize the needs of the farmers. We recognize the needs of people, working people, the ordinary families, the people in northern Saskatchewan which you have neglected and ignored and abandoned.

Many, many memories will come back, Mr. Premier, when you find the courage to drop the writ, when you have the courage to issue that writ. I'll be around; I'm young. I might not be in this building in the next term of government, but I'll be around yet some day.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I just couldn't let it pass. Most people that develop this province, whether they're homesteaders or small business and so forth, had less than grade 4 education and they were free enterprisers. They were capitalists, and they left Europe to own their own land and to set up their own businesses and to have the freedom and opportunity to earn a new way of life and create a brand-new country. They did not have a Ph.D. in economics or a law degree or anything else. My grandfathers that homesteaded here had grade 3 education and grade 4 education, respectively. So the member can talk about his education.

The people that started this province and the economic activity that led to the development we had today had very little education, and they thought and believe the same way I do. I want you to understand that. All those people that developed this province think and thought the same way I do. It was before they had any idea of the

public sector owning anything.

So you can mention your grade 4 education, fair enough. There's been a lot of people in this province have had grade 4 education and built a great deal right with their bare hands — farms and businesses and communities and community centres and all kinds of things and they still are . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Exactly. And they don't have much education and they are still building.

The attitude that will work is one that says that I respect myself and the community and my family and I will build as a family. That's the attitude that built this country. Real families. Not the Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations but real families that believe in each other and believe in their children. Now if you believe in that and you believe in economic development, then we have no problem, but if you say that it has to be done all in Regina and I say that obviously it can be done with families, we've got a difference.

And again I say in all respect, we agree to disagree on political philosophy. You would rather have the government involved, say, in the department of northern Saskatchewan. I don't even think you had any hearings before you set that up. You just had DNS, and it was rejected. People absolutely rejected DNS, but you may like to do that again. You close uranium mines, set up DNS, and do these things. Fair enough. You made your point. I think, fair enough, we'll agree to disagree.

Mr. Yew: — Mr. Premier, I concur that many of our pioneers pioneered this land. They pioneered it for a good purpose too, but they sure the heck didn't do it for Peter Pocklington and the likes of Weyerhaeuser. They wanted to build a province that they could be proud of. They elected you to look after this province, but, by gosh, they will not elect you a second term of office.

Wasn't it you, Mr. Premier, the economist, that said one time that deficits — and I'm referring to your \$2 billion deficit — at one time or another you mentioned that deficits are just deferred payments. That money has to be paid back, Mr. Premier. And I'll tell you, the pioneers of this province understand that, and I understand it too.

With that I'm going to leave. My colleagues have other questions to raise. Thank you very much.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — The individuals that are successful, that are builders, will create companies. And companies are not bad, whether it's a meat packing company or an automobile manufacturing company or a pulp company. That's not bad. I can think of people like Peter Pocklington . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, but you're saying that it's bad because they create economic activity. I believe Peter Pocklington quit school in grade 8 or grade 10. He didn't finish school . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I'm saying he quit school in grade 10, and he created economic activity, and he wants to come in here and create 150 or 200 jobs in North Battleford, and you were just crying because you didn't have a job.

And this very individual with Grade 10 is coming in here to create a brand new bacon plant, and you can't see the forest for the trees. You can't stand there and tell me that

you're afraid to work at one time, and then go over and say, this individual's coming in to create a brand new bacon processing plant for 100 new jobs for you and your family and you're against him because he's got Grade 10 or it creates economic activity?

You're against success in economic activity. It's economic apartheid; it's a philosophy. If you're successful, you must be evil. It's just as I said to the Leader of the Opposition, you think that every business man lies and cheats and steals. That's what you believe. And you believe everybody that ever is in the private sector will not be fair and will not create and will not build.

And you can stand there night after night and talk about that foolishness? Well I hope you stand here until the middle of December, and you can talk every night and tell the people of Saskatchewan about your economic philosophy. And you can stand there and tell me that you think you're worried about getting a job, and on the other hand condemn every individual that built this country with his own two hands and has some smack and "get up and go" and would like to create some economic activity, and you can pooh-pooh them.

If they build a new bacon plant or build an upgrader or build this or build that, obviously they must be in the private sector, so they're evil and they're crooked and they steal and they lie.

Now you can believe that, and you can pump that into your children, but I'll tell you the majority of Saskatchewan people don't believe that. We built this country with honesty and integrity and hard work — men and women. And they weren't — no — they weren't all in government. They were individual families — individuals who built, who respected each other and had the respect of their colleagues.

I respect people in the public sector and the private sector, but I do not condone, and I will not condone anybody else saying that this administration or anybody else will practise the economic apartheid that you believe in where you blacklist half the community because they're in the private sector.

I respect the private sector and families and farmers and men and women and children who live in the private sector, and if you don't believe in that, that's fair enough. But don't come weeping to me if you said, I want a job, on one hand, and then on the same breath say, but I can't stand anybody who's going to provide economic development, because this person is in business. Wouldn't you think economic development is if it isn't business? Businesses create economic development, and they create jobs. Intercontinental Packers creates jobs for people. How can you be against them? Well if philosophically you are, fair enough. But don't cry out of both sides of your mouth and say that you want work, and then at the same breath say that you're against the very companies that are going to provide employment. You can't have it both ways.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yew: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask you,

Mr. Premier . . . I don't want to get into a political harangue. My colleagues have some very important questions to ask of you. But I want to ask you one very important question. We started out by asking and talking and wanting answers on Indian, Metis and non-status people in this province and throughout Canada, and you didn't provide me with any concrete commitments.

But my next question, my very important question, Mr. Premier, is this: will you hold, before the Weyerhaeuser deal is closed and finalized, will you hold with the people of this province and especially with the people of northern Saskatchewan who will be directly effected — will you hold a public inquiry, a major public inquiry such as the one that was initiated by the Chief Justice of this province, Mr. Ed Bayda. He is a very just man as far as I am concerned and as far as many people in the North and in this province are concerned. Will you hold a major public inquiry into the Weyerhaeuser deal or will you not? That is before signing and completing that deal.

(2130)

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, again I would suggest to the hon. member, you can't have it both ways. Do you want jobs? You want jobs? You want jobs for northern Saskatchewan people? Well if we're going to build a new paper-mill with 165 new jobs or 165 families, do you want to have hearings on it, or do you want to have it built? It would seem to me that if you've been crying for a job and you want jobs and we're going to bring in \$250 million to build a brand-new paper-mill, that you would like to see that, because that's jobs.

Now, you talk about hearings. We've had environmental hearings; that's one thing. But I didn't see any hearings in Saskatchewan when you nationalized the potash industry — not one hearing. I didn't hear of any hearings in Saskatchewan when you bought the pulp-mill — not one. So I mean, look it, you're talking out of both sides of your mouth. You don't really want hearings; you don't even want the jobs. You just want the politics of talking about the private sector versus the public sector into the pulp business.

So look, I'm telling you, we're going to have our environmental impact analysis, and we will. But I'll have just as many hearings as you did the potash industry when you nationalized them, with respect to the economic impact.

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. Order, please.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Premier, before we forget it — we will no doubt have lots of time for this — but I would like to get the names and salaries of your staff in Executive Council. We would like the names, titles, and salaries of your staff in Executive Council before I forget it.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — We'll get that over to you.

Mr. Shillington: — Given your track record, Mr. Premier, I have to ask you when.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I can send it over right now to the hon. member.

Mr. Shillington: —Will you give me the details of any salary increases of any way, shape, or form that your staff have got.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, if he wants me to calculate any increases for any member of Executive Council over the last fiscal year, we'll have to calculate them.

I mean, you've got two pages of people there. Right? What, precisely, do you want? I mean, some of them got maybe a 3 per cent, some got an increment, some of them got a promotion, some of them got . . . What would you like?

Mr. Shillington: —I want what I asked for, and that is the percentage increases that your staff got.

You have held the public service to slightly over 3 per cent. Not all of your senior people have been held to that, and I want to know what increases they got.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, we'll have to calculate them. You have last year's salaries with the last year's names . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, yes you do. You got them from me last year. And you've got this year's salaries and this year's names so that you can calculate and we'll calculate them, so we'll go ahead with our calculator here and give you the increases.

Mr. Shillington: —By what time may I expect them, Mr. Premier? Will you have them ready for me tomorrow morning when these estimates resume?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes.

Mr. Shillington: —Mr. Rousseau's salary is not on here. What is his salary?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — \$60,000 per year.

Mr. Shillington: —I know you don't take responsibility for the newspaper, but he was quoted as having a salary of \$70,000 a year . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member from Saskatoon is giving you a lot of assistance here that I know is invaluable. I wonder if I could get the Premier to answer the questions and not the member from Saskatoon. Are there any increases or other fringe benefits which would go to make up a higher salary?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the salary is \$60,000. Any additional benefits will be the same kind of cost-of-living things that the previous agent-general got and the agent-general before him got. So his salary is \$60,000 and the normal sorts of benefits that go with that position.

Mr. Shillington: —I notice as well that Mr. Tkachuk's name is not on this list. I wonder why that is, Mr. Premier.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — He doesn't work for Executive Council.

Mr. Shillington: —Mr. Premier, are any of these people employed by a contract of service, and if so, is it a standard contract of service; and if so, would you be

prepared to file a copy of that contract of service?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — We have three people who are under personal service contracts: Mr. Mik Barabas, for the planning bureau at \$300 a day; Mr. Dave Black, administration, \$190 a day; and Lorelei Sigmeth, administration, at \$100 a day.

Mr. Shillington: —The gentleman who is making \$300 a day, what is . . . I'm curious as well about the terms of the contract. Is it for a term certain?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — It's \$330 a day for Mr. Barabas, it's not 300, and the position is a scientific and technical advisor. The scientific and technical advisor provides the Government of Saskatchewan with scientific and technical advice as specially requested from time to time with regard to the development of the province's energy and natural resources. Mr. Barabas is a professional engineer. He's a registered, professional, active engineer, licensed consulting engineer. He is the principal of his firm presently providing consulting services to the planning bureau, Executive Council. He has had a great deal of experience. He's well-respected in the industry, and it's about normal for that kind of professional in terms of engineering advice, water advice, energy advice, and so forth.

Mr. Shillington: —Could you tell me briefly what the circumstances were for the other two service contracts. I wouldn't normally get into this except the service contracts were badly abused by the like of Mr. Leier who got an enormous salary. And I wonder, Mr. Premier, could you briefly give me the circumstances under which the two other service contracts were entered into.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Miss Sigmeth is a secretary; that's what she's contracted to do. And Mr. Black is a co-ordinator in terms of logistics in my office because I make a lot of trips, got to a lot of different places in Saskatchewan. I'm all over the place and he helps co-ordinate my transportation, my itinerary, making sure people are there in terms of doing advance work and so forth to make sure it works. So logistics co-ordination.

Mr. Shillington: —Mr. Premier, I wanted to ask you about Mr. Tkachuk. I was impressed with the integrity shown by the former manager of the SGI who promptly fired Mr. Ryan, a political, when he got out of line. I was impressed with both Mr. Black's courage and his integrity.

I was disappointed, Mr. Premier, that you weren't made of the same timber. I was disappointed that you chose to defend and condone Mr. Tkachuk's behaviour, whereas Mr. Black, to his everlasting credit, showed both courage and integrity, and it also appears that it cost him his job. So it appears to have been an expensive act on his part. But I'm sure he will always be proud of himself for having done it.

I wonder, Mr. Premier, why you couldn't have shown the same courage and integrity — why you couldn't have done the obvious, and reprimanded Mr. Tkachuk, indeed fire him, as happened to Mr. Ryan.

I just expressed the . . . Mr. Premier, I simply expressed the forlorn hope that you might have shown the courage and the integrity that Mr. Black showed when his subordinate did something that was clearly out of line to have reviewed a confidential file. I just express the forlorn hope that you might have shown the same courage and integrity and fired Mr. Tkachuk.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, maybe the hon. member would like to fire people. I've said at the time and I'll say now — when individuals come to me for help, I can go to deputy ministers, I can go to heads of Crown corporations and say I want the information on this particular case because I believe the individual has a reasonable case. And I do that. They come to my office. And my staff does that. They will help me get the information from deputies, from Crown corporations, wherever. And you know yourself, having been in government, they'll come to the minister's office and say, I don't think I've been treated fairly. I want you and your officials to do something about it. Well how in the world do you think they do something about it if they don't look at it?

So I have them coming in here all the time, farmers, welfare recipients, workers compensation, you name it. They come into me and say, my crop insurance needs to be re-looked at, my life insurance does, my workers compensation, my something else — 'cause I don't believe I've been treated fair by SaskTel, or SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), or crop insurance, or Highways, or whoever it may be, and I have to review it and I do. And that's what my staff does. And when you were minister, your staff would do the same.

So when my staff asks for files, or asks for information — and they're given information; they do that on a regular bases.

So as I said, Mr. Tkachuk does not work for me, does not work for the government. He is not here — he's not in Executive Council, so he has nothing to do with Executive Council estimates.

Mr. Shillington: —He's everything to do with Executive Council estimates.

Mr. Premier, if Mr. Tkachuk had asked the general manager for a report and given it to you, that would have been quite appropriate. He didn't do that. He choose to surreptitiously obtain a confidential file to which he had no right to access. Mr. Ryan was fired. Mr. Tkachuk was not. The situation strikes me and almost all observers as being very, very unfair. Either Mr. Ryan was dealt with a great deal too harshly, or Mr. Tkachuk was dealt with, with a great deal too much leniency, Mr. Premier. The facts don't admit of any other then those two conclusions.

(2145)

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Tkachuk asked for the file and received it. Right! And he got the file and received it, and he looked at it. And they took the case to court and the judge says that Mr. Tkachuk was right. It shouldn't have even been in court and agreed with him, and they examined it, and so be it.

So if you want to say that Mr. Black should have fired Mr. Tkachuk — he didn't work for him. Mr. Tkachuk went down and asked for the file and got the file, and he reviewed it. He's done that 100 times if he's done it once, from going to various officials and say I want the information of that to give; they gave him the information. Is he supposed to get fired because he asked for the information . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Come on — hardly. So he got it; he was right The judge said he was right. It was reasonable. So we'll leave it at that.

Mr. Shillington: —I take it whenever friends of Mr. Tkachuk's come around, he is quite — I take this to be your position — he is well within his rights to surreptitiously obtain confidential files and then go back to the general managers or deputy ministers and lean on them in an attempt to obtain the result which he cannot obtain by more appropriate means. I take it, Mr. Premier, that that's behaviour you condone. Because if it is, your government is even more patronage-ridden than I thought it was.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to ask the Premier a couple of questions, and I don't intend to take a long time.

This question probably would have been better put in Agriculture, and it may have been, but I had some people from the Swift Current area who were asking me about the single-desk selling in the beef stabilization program. Are there any announcements forthcoming about getting rid of it at the present time?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I was recently in a conversation with Mr. Boyd Anderson with respect to the whole single desk-selling agency, and there is no obligation. I want to make it very clear — there's no obligation to sell under the single desk.

And the — Mr. Anderson wanted to make that very clear to all members of the livestock industry. They can certainly choose to sell it on a single desk under the rail-grade system, but if they want to chose some other mechanism — as long as it's acceptable to both sides and it's acceptable to the board.

So I think that it's operating; it's being improved. It seems to be well received. The advice that I'm getting from Boyd Anderson, who talks to the people all the time, is that it's working, and in fact it's better understood and is accommodating the needs of the industry.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I want to get you clear on this. Then you're in favour of single-desk selling as it presently exists in the beef stabilization program?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I'm saying that the single-desk selling agency was set up to market rail grade so individuals could have that option. Right now they can either use that option, or they can use another option. And some like it, and some don't. And as Mr. Anderson points out, you've got it any way you like. You can use it, and you can still stabilize your cattle if you want to market it some place else, as long as it's agreeable with the board as it operates. So they can go either way, and it seems to

be quite acceptable to members. If they like it . . . It's like enabling legislation with respect to a marketing board. If the majority of producers like it, fine; if they don't, then they can change it.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — So what you're saying then is that we don't have single-desk selling in the province at the present time?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, we do. We have it, and it's operating, and for those that want to use it, they use it, and for those that don't, they don't have to.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, it's interesting to have single-desk selling but be able to sell anywhere. That's a strange definition, but it fits well with the Conservative administration and their ability to administer. But there will be those in Swift Current — and the member from Morse will know them well, and the member from Swift Current will know them well — who don't agree that there is an option of selling single-desk or going their own way, even to the point where a number of them are moving out of the province.

I'll tell you this, that there's a group of business people in Swift Current who have been there for many, many years who are moving their trucking firm and their cattle operation out of the province because they can't deal with you people.

Now these are people who worked for you in the last election. They're people who worked for you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, not only the individual the member from Souris-Cannington mentions, but his partner and all the other partners in the firm who worked hard and donated to the Conservative party are telling us that because of your lack of courage — that you promised to get rid of single-desk selling when you were elected, when you were down in Swift Current in the last election. You promised them that you would get rid of it and haven't done it — that you haven't defended your Conservative policy.

Now I want to tell you that you have a problem with that, with your Conservative friends. And I want to say that there are many people who worked for you in the last election — many people who worked for you in the last election who are now fleeing from the Conservative party. That's in Swift Current — Swift Current.

I know why you didn't call a June election. I know why you didn't call a June election, because I think there's something happening out there in rural Saskatchewan, Swift Current, Weyburn, places like that — right in the middle of the oil patch, interestingly enough — maybe in Estevan.

I want to say the Premier was talking about electoral success earlier. Well I was there the night of the electoral success in 1980 in Estevan.

An Hon. Member: — In '82.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — No, in 1980. I was in Estevan that night. And I remember sitting in this Assembly when Mr. Larter resigned his seat — he used to sit right over here in

this desk — resigned his seat, the safest seat in the province so the now Premier could run. I remember that night very well. And they parachuted him into Estevan into the safest seat. He had run up in Saskatoon and had lost in 1978; I believe it was in Nutana. He ran in Nutana and lost. Then they parachuted him down into the best seat in the province. And Bob Larter resigned his seat, and then was sent over to London for a reward after the election in '82.

But I want to say that what happened in 1980, what happened in 1980 when the now Premier lost that seat, the safest Tory seat in the province, is beginning to happen again. That's what's happening. When you have cattlemen and truckers in Swift Current saying that they can't make a living in Saskatchewan, that they can't . . .

An Hon. Member: — Katzman says he had the safest seat.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well maybe Mr. Katzman, or the member from Rosthern, does have the safest seat. But I want to tell you that there's a trend occurring right across the province, and that is as that in the Swift Current and Weyburn area, that the Conservatives are going down and going down very quickly. And I want to say that that trend is only going quicker and quicker the further we get away from the last election. We are now well into the fifth year of this government's mandate — five years. We are now five years . . . into the fifth year of the Conservative mandate.

And I want to say that when we look at what this government has done for the people of the province, there is no doubt and no reason why they shouldn't be slipping in the polls and with popularity with the people of the province. Because I want to say that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the member from Regina Victoria is shouting from his seat, and I want to say that he has a few problems as well with the candidate Harry Van Mulligen who's running against him. And he should be out canvassing if he intends to win, because he's going to have a tough time.

But I want to talk about some of the reasons that we are going to have a different configuration in this Assembly after the next election — a very different configuration.

I want to say that in the area of housing . . . Let's take one area. During the late 1970s the housing starts in Saskatchewan ran between 8,000 a year and 12,000 a year, and there were thousands of people working in the housing industry. Well I want to tell you that in 1985, in the last full year of this government's administration, there were 5,200 housing starts — half of what it was in 1978, '79 and 1980 — one-half of what it was. Young people no longer are building houses. They've quit; they can't afford to; there's no jobs. When we left office there were about 25 or 26,000 people unemployed. That number has now risen to 45,000 families without jobs — 45,000 without jobs in this province.

If we look at welfare . . . I was the minister at the time of the last budget.

An Hon. Member: — Not a very good one.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, maybe not a very good one. But I'll tell you that our last budget . . . in our last budget there were \$98 million set aside for welfare — 98 million. This year the number will exceed 200 million being paid out in welfare to people who can't find jobs in this province, more than 100 per cent more on welfare in this province in 1986 than there was in 1982.

I want to say that that is a disgrace when you have young families who want to work, sitting at home collecting welfare because you, Mr. Premier, have been able to administer the affairs of this province to meet the needs and to build jobs. And I say one of the areas you have failed miserably is in housing construction, and your own records will prove that, that this past year there were 5,200 housing starts which is half of what it was, half of what it was under our government. That's right, half of what it was. One-half of the single-housing unit starts as what it was back in the late years of the NDP government. Now that should be an embarrassment to the Premier. That should be an embarrassment.

But I want to tell you that a New Democratic government would do something about that. It would do something about that. We have a program that would give a \$7,000 grant to every young family that wanted to build a house in this province — every one — whether they were on a farm, or whether they were in a small town or a city, whether it was Estevan, Saskatoon, Souris-Cannington — any of those areas — young families would get \$7,000. And I'll tell you, that would create jobs.

Where would we get the money? I'll tell you where we would get the money. We would get the money from the likes of Peter Pocklington, from the Weyerhaeuser, the 248 million we're giving away to that multinational forest giant from Tacoma — the American company who's coming up and getting seven million acres — seven million acres of our forest, of prime forest, as well as \$248 million . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right.

And I'll tell you that you have a little problem when you look at the housing industry — one half of what it was. And I'll tell you that our program would create 15,000 jobs at the cost of one deal, that Tacoma deal that you're giving away to Weyerhaeuser. That would pay for the housing program and many other programs.

You want to wonder where we'd get the money from? It would be easy. Simply quit giving it away to your political allies. Quit giving it to Pocklington, quit giving it to Weyerhaeuser, and give it to the people of the province to build homes. That's all you have to do. It's an easy solution.

And I say to you, Mr. Premier, that you are a disappointment to the young families in this province. I have many farm families . . . the family wants to repair their homes. There's no money. We haven't made money on the farm since 1982 when you were first elected . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well I paid interest at 20 per cent. I never paid at 22 because the credit union in Shaunavon never charged more than 18. But the Premier is so out of touch with reality that he keeps yelling 22 per cent. I farm. I never

paid more than 18 per cent at the credit union in Shaunavon. It was never higher than that. But I'll tell you, when it was 18 per cent in 1981, I paid income tax and made money . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, everyone made money. Everyone made money in Saskatchewan in 1981, and they had jobs.

But I'll tell you, today in Shaunavon constituency there are many farmers who can't repair their farm homes. They don't have any money to repair their homes. And I'll tell you, we have a \$7,000 grant to repair the farm homes of this province that is unlike any other program anywhere in Canada. And every farm family will be eligible for the program — \$7,000 for every farm family for their house.

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. Order, please.

The committee reported progress.

MOTIONS

House Adjournment

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, just prior to adjournment, I wonder if, by leave of the Assembly, I'd like to move the following motion, seconded by my colleague, the member for Regina Rosemont:

That when this Assembly adjourns on Friday June 27th, 1986, it do stand adjourned until Wednesday, July 2, 1986.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:03 p.m.