

EVENING SITTING

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
(BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Lane that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance, and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Tchorzewski.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I was in the midst of saying prior to supper recess, I think it's time that the people of Saskatchewan began to truly examine the nature of the hidden agenda put forward by the Conservative government. And they've seen the secret agenda of cuts, of slashes, of hacks brought out of the closet after the last election because they didn't have the political courage to put their secret agenda forward to the people because they knew they wouldn't get elected.

But there's one part of that secret agenda, Mr. Speaker, that they left in the closet, and that part of the secret agenda is the reason for doing what they're doing. And it is not, as we have shown and we will continue to show to the people of Saskatchewan, it is not the fiscal fantasy land dreamed up by the Minister of Finance. It has absolutely nothing to do with the statistics put forward, the twisted and insidious statistics put forward by the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden.

There's another reason for what they're doing, and that reason, I submit, is one which this government has put openly and has put on the table for the people of Saskatchewan, and that's the reason of free trade. Because we are seeing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what free trade really means to Saskatchewan, in the slashing of health care, in the slashing of education, in the slashing of social services. We are looking into the future of our country and our province.

I refer the members to a good booklet written by Mr. Ed Finn, a researcher, well-known Canadian researcher. It's called "The Free Trade Delusion." And it's a very, very apt title, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of the kind of delusion that the members opposite are living in, the kind of deluded world, deluded reality and extremist visions that they have. And it talks about in this little booklet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, something that the Premier of this province is very fond of using — a buzz word, a quotation, a phrase — and those are the so-called non-tariff barriers to free trade.

This is what Mr. Finn has to say about those non-tariff barriers to free trade. First of all he asks the question: what are non-tariff barriers? And the answer that he gives is this:

They are government measures designed to discourage or block imports, mostly by giving preferential treatment to goods or services produced in Canada. They cover a broad range of

policies, from setting quotas on foreign-made products to subsidizing exports, from giving domestic firms tax breaks to fixing price levels through marketing boards. Even Canada's superior social programs . . .

Now I want you to pay attention to this Mr. Deputy Speaker:

Even Canada's superior social programs such as medicare and unemployment insurance are considered unfair subsidies by some Americans.

Those "some Americans" happen to be the people who sit on the negotiating team for the American government at the free trade talks in Ottawa. And they asked another question: well how do they reach that conclusion? And the answer that Mr. Finn gives is:

They argue that to the extent that our more generous social services interfere with market forces, they give our producers and workers an unfair competitive advantage. Our fishermen, for example, unlike those in the United States, are entitled to unemployment insurance benefits which the Americans claim puts their fishermen at a disadvantage. And they see medicare as an indirect subsidy to firms and workers who don't have to finance their health care from their own pockets so as to have . . . (as so many have to do in the United States.)

So the Americans want us to get rid of these programs and policies to bring our social security system down to their level.

The term for this process is harmonization. And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard that word. I heard "in tune," I heard "harmonization," I heard "bringing in step with." Those phrases were contained in the budget of the government opposite because that's what they're talking about. They want to bring our social services — and I'm talking about social services in the broad sense — they want to bring them into harmonization with those of the Americans. Because the American masters are putting pressure on the government opposite for the reasons that Mr. Finn has outlined in this booklet, because they see it as non-tariff barriers to free trade.

And that's what free trade brings. That's what free trade will bring to this province. We see it in the government's . . . in the agenda of the government opposite. We see it in this budget. We see it in their actions. They are leveling the playing field. That's what they call it, a level playing field. And they're leveling medicare and they're leveling education and they're leveling social services and they are leveling all those hills of progress that the people of Saskatchewan have built up since 1944, since the election of the first socialist government in Canada. The mountains of progress that the people of this province have built, the Tories are leveling.

You know in North Dakota, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have along the sides of the highway: welcome to North Dakota, mountain removal project completed. And I

predict that in four years we'll see similar signs up on the sides of the highways in Saskatchewan: welcome to Saskatchewan, the mountains of social progress removed compliments of your friendly Conservative government.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province don't want that. They don't want that. They don't want this budget, and they don't want this government. They don't want this government. They want a level playing field. The government opposite wants a level playing field, one that's nothing more than a barren wasteland of rapacious capitalism, of rapacious free enterprise. That's the kind of level playing field that these people are interested in, and in the process they are intending to level the social progress of the people of Saskatchewan.

Free trade is their hidden agenda. Free trade is behind the kind of things that this government did in its budget and before the budget, and the kind of slashing and hacking that's taking place, we're going to lay that on the doorsteps of free trade, because they've been talking about it and they mean it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to conclude with a few words as to the future of this province and the future of certain members opposite. The people don't want you, gentlemen and ladies. The people don't want you. The 7,000 people that were out front of this legislature were saying, we don't want you. We don't want your social programs. We don't want your free trade. We don't want the kind of hacking and slashing that you've done. We don't want you, they say, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They say, we don't want you because you lied to us. They say, we don't want you because you didn't tell us the truth in the election. They say, we don't want you because you don't keep your word. And they say, we don't want you because you don't have the strength and courage of your convictions. You were afraid to put forward what you really intended to do. And we don't want you, and we're going to get rid of you.

I made a prediction after the last election that the people would be speaking in the streets of this province, and that prediction came true.

I want to make another prediction. These members here talk about how they're going to last for four or five years, this Tory wrecking crew; how they will live on for that length of time. And I predict that they're not going to do it. I predict that they're going to be gone before that period of time. Because the people of this province are beginning to rise, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They're beginning to rise — workers and farmers, young people, senior citizens. All those people, the real people that make this province tick, they're beginning to rise, and they're going to continue to rise and they're going to continue to mobilize and to organize to drive you people from this legislature, to drive you people from the province.

The people of this province don't want you and they're going to get rid of you. That is my prediction; that is my prediction.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if people think

that's an idle boast, well I want to put it to the test. I see that the Minister of Finance is in the House tonight, and I'm glad to see he's here, because I issue the following challenge to him. Put your seat up. Put your seat up and let the people of Qu'Appelle-Lumsden decide whether or not they want you, or whether or not they want your government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm willing to put my seat up. I'm willing to put my seat up. I'm willing to put my seat up if the minister opposite puts his seat up. But you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, oh, I think we've got a response. I think we've got a response! I think that we're maybe flushing them out from behind the bushes. Are you going to put up your seat? Will you put up your seat? I'll put mine up if you put yours up.

Let the people decide; let the people decide who's lying to them. Let's call an election, a mini referendum. Let's call that mini referendum, Mr. Minister. Your seat versus mine — your seat versus mine. You put it up if you've got the guts, because the people of Saskatchewan are saying to the Minister of Finance, you lied to us. You lied to us; you lied to us in your budget; you didn't tell the truth in the election. And they don't want you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're saying that he's a liar, and that he should resign. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muller: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise today and join in the 1987-88 budget debate.

I believe this budget represents a crucial step along the road to future opportunity and prosperity for the people of Saskatchewan. The economic realities of today have made it apparent that if we wish to ensure our future prosperity, we must take decisive action now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the past few years our province's economy has been severely shaken by forces beyond our control. Droughts, flooding, and agricultural trade wars have hammered the farmers of Saskatchewan who are the backbone of this province. To repeat an old phrase, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the farmers suffer, we all suffer in Saskatchewan.

But I'm proud to say that our Progressive Conservative government has worked to protect our farmers like no other government in Saskatchewan's history. We reacted swiftly and effectively when drought and flooding struck, unlike the previous NDP government, who all but ignored drought-stricken farmers in '80 and '81. We acted immediately. We did not sit and squabble with the federal government as others had done. We acted.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we knew that we had to protect our farmers when we introduced the farm production loan program. We also knew there was a cost to this protection, just as there was for our mortgage interest reduction program. But our Progressive Conservative government believes it is our responsibility to protect Saskatchewan people.

The members opposite certainly didn't when people were losing their homes and their farms at 20-per-cent-plus interest rates. They also let our health care system slip into despair, all the while telling about how much they had done. Certainly they had done a lot. They put the moratorium on nursing homes. They ignored our seniors. And just to take and add something here, that they say we're tearing apart our medicare system; we're not looking after our seniors.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to say to you and to this House, and I hope these people across the way will take notice of this. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government's commitment to health and well-being to a citizen is strong indeed. The people of my constituency know this to be true, and the people of Canwood and district especially so.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm proud to say that a new 30-bed special care home is being built in Canwood right now—concrete evidence, Mr. Speaker, of our government commitment to Saskatchewan and seniors. And I really want to thank the former minister of Health and today's Minister of Health, that have gone with me there and seen the need and certainly have reacted to it. And this is the kind of reaction that our government has been famous for. We've gone out there, talked to the people, seen what their need is, and then we have made commitments and followed through. And this is what's really important.

I've already went through this, but I wanted, I really wanted to bring it to their attention that we are committed to the seniors and to the health care system of this province. If we are to have the flexibility to protect people in the future as we have done in the past, then we must deal with the fiscal realities of today. Difficult decisions have to be made as well as significant changes to the way government spends its revenue. Since prices of our province's main commodities have declined, and with them government revenues, we have been forced to reorder our spending priorities and streamline government structure in order that we might deal with the issue of deficit management.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government is working to make itself as effective and efficient as possible. The taxpayers of this province expect, and rightly so, that we first get our own fiscal house in order before asking them to help. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are doing just that. We have been streamlining and consolidating government departments and programs. This has meant that we have had to let some people go. That is never an easy or a pleasant thing to do. But I believe we have been fair and humane in doing so. It would not be fair to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we did not act immediately to control government spending.

(1915)

The people of this province realize the situation we are in and I believe they support us in our efforts to reduce the deficit. This includes our efforts to rationalize how government spends money. This has meant changing the way government funds third parties and the way it delivers social programs.

If I might, Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch upon how changes to the education system and welfare reform have touched the people of my constituency.

This budget has more fully fleshed out the direction we as a province are taking for our education system. Previous initiatives such as the education development fund and the university renewal and development fund have gone a long way to building our province's educational system. The core curriculum study is another example of our government's commitment to the future of education. This study of the kindergarten to 12 system is a major building stone in our educational structure, one that will complement and enhance those changes announced in this budget. Our government's new education initiatives are based on three sound principles: excellence, accessibility, and efficiency.

When we speak of excellence, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about things like the new \$35 million Northern Institute of Technology in Prince Albert. This is a world-class institution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it was one of the first in our province's technical institutes to really specialize in programs it offered. It is special in that it offers courses in areas such as forestry and tourism, which are so vital to northern Saskatchewan.

It is an important example of how concentrating our resources on specific programs at each institute is the most efficient and effective way of delivering educational programs. By combining our province's four technical institutes and four urban community colleges into the super institute, more resources can be put into programs through the savings realized by the elimination of duplication of programs and administrative overhead. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to gear our adult institutions to educate people in the skills necessary for today's world economy. If we are going to diversify our province's economy, we must first train the people who will do the diversifying and the building. That is what our education system must be able to do. I think we all agree that we must change the adult education system to meet these challenges even if that change causes some disruption. If we do not see those changes through, we would be failing in our responsibility to the people of Saskatchewan to build the future.

Having touched upon education, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words about our welfare reform. Our government inherited a welfare system that was not accountable, was complex, and one that failed to provide hope for the future of those people on social assistance. The system, Mr. Speaker, invited abuse, and encouraged dependency on welfare.

Our government made immediate and effective changes that have gone a long way to breaking the welfare cycle. We have made sure that those who really need it, the single mothers, were given more support. We encourage those who could work to upgrade their skills and education, through programs like the Saskatchewan skills development program and the Saskatchewan employment development program. Thousands of people have received valuable training and work experience through these programs. We have also reduced

numbers of cases of welfare abuse and streamlined the delivery system.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the part of welfare reform that I'm most excited about is the new work training initiative taking place in my constituency. I'm talking about the program being run by Par Industries. In this program, welfare recipients are offered a chance to participate in bush operation training programs. They learn valuable skills and at the same time make a valuable contribution to the community. This program gives them a chance to break out of the welfare system, and if the people I have talked to . . .

An Hon. Member: — Valuable skills cutting bush.

Mr. Muller: — Ah! The member from Regina Centre makes a comment. If he would wait until I'm finished, maybe he'd learn something.

This program gives them a chance to break out of the welfare system, as I've said. If the people I've talked to in the program are any indication, it gives them back a sense of self worth.

Mr. Speaker, I know of people who have found work thanks to the skills and experience they have gained at this program. I've talked to employers who say they have gone to Par Industries looking for people trained in bush work because they know the people there want to work, and they are trained to do the job. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the forest industry has never been so strong, thanks to the efforts of our Progressive Conservative government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muller: — And I am, of course, referring to the new paper mill being built in my constituency of Shellbrook-Torch River. There's a lot of people in this House fail to realize that that's where it's being built. But it isn't in Prince Albert, it's in the seat of Shellbrook-Torch River, one of the greatest places in Saskatchewan. This quarter-billion-dollar-plus paper mill, along with the modernization of the P.A. pulp mill by Weyerhaeuser, means thousands of jobs for people in my constituency and through the province. It means orders for Saskatchewan suppliers and it means continued economic stability for the area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, economic diversification is the future of our province. We must continue to develop projects like the new paper mill, for without them we will remain vulnerable to the boom and busy cycle of agriculture and resource commodities. That is why this budget is so important, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This budget will give us the flexibility to take advantage of future economic opportunities, and give us the ability to further diversify and strengthen our province's economy.

That is why I will be voting against the amendment and for the main motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy

Speaker. I'm very pleased to rise in the Assembly today to participate in this budget speech debate for my constituents throughout the Athabasca constituency, and for Saskatchewan people all across this province.

This budget before us is a budget of betrayal, a budget of betrayal, Mr. Deputy Speaker. First, it betrays the Devine Conservative election promises of tax cuts. I'm sure that all members remember quite clearly those Conservative election ads, those PC election promises. And they said, a conservative government will totally eliminate the gas tax. And I'm sure you'll remember that one. I'm sure the member for Shellbrook-Torch River remembers that one, and I'm sure the member for Turtleford remembers it also, for that was the promise they put in their election ads in 1982 — to totally eliminate the gas tax.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my constituents are asking: did the Conservative Party know at the time that they were campaigning or did the Conservative Party only decide later to institute gas taxes? I suspect they knew all along that they were going to do this.

And there are other promises. A Conservative government will totally eliminate the sales taxes in their first term of office. Remember that promise? I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that you probably remember that promise pretty clearly. And now what do we have? They haven't taken off the sales tax that we had, but they've now added two more percentage points to that and we now have a 7 per cent sales tax in Saskatchewan. A tax, a betrayal, and a tax that your party, sir, promised to remove totally in their first term of office.

And the Conservative promises that they would reduce the provincial income tax by 10 per cent, now they've increased that another 50 per cent, the flat tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to one and one-half per cent, and that totally flies against the Conservative promises.

Conservative promises made, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and promises broken — a betrayal of Saskatchewan people. But the biggest betrayal of all is the Devine Conservative government's betrayal of medicare — dental therapists, the destruction of the children's dental program. Dental therapists, nurses and assistants, equipment that has been set up in our school system across this province for preventative care to the children of this province — and that is eliminated. Now what we see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is what they're going to do. They're going to sell all that dental equipment that has been set up and been set up in every school system in this province.

Arbitrary limit on insured chiropractic visits, Mr. Speaker. The destruction of the prescription drug plan. Mr. Speaker, that most certainly is what is causing many hardships and is going to be a bureaucratic nightmare in this province, as you see line-ups, as you go down to the drug stores now, trying to get their prescriptions filled. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, your government has put a two-month limit on that. But there has been big line-ups. The attack on medicare by this Conservative government . . .

Mr. Speaker, with leave I would like to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Thompson: — I would like to introduce a former colleague of mine, and a seat mate, who is sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and I speak of the former member of Redberry, Mr. Dennis Banda. Welcome to the legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Lane that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance, and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Tchorzewski.

Mr. Thompson: — Mr. Speaker, since this Devine government took office it has deliberately and consistently attacked the services of northern people, the people of my constituency. The betrayal of the North is continued in this budget. And one has to take a look at the *Estimates*, Mr. Speaker. Funds for northern health services, that has been cut. The wildlife branch of the Department of Parks, that's cut. The fisheries branch, that's also been cut. And the forestry branch, cut by 42 staff and \$1 million, an important industry in our province.

This is the same Conservative government that made a sweetheart deal with the Weyerhaeuser corporation and gave to the American firm control of our northern forest — now cuts back sharply in provincial forestry resources and development. One just has to take a look at what has taken place in the nursery program in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you see that they have cut back some of the nurseries. Satellite nurseries have been totally eliminated. Jobs in the two remaining nurseries, they have also been cut. And this is what we need — we have to continue to renew the forestry that we have in this province. And since Weyerhaeuser has come into this province, we now see that those nurseries are gone and reforestation is not a priority any more.

Mr. Speaker, this budget brought in by the former Liberal member is bad news for Saskatchewan people, and I say it very clearly shows there is absolutely no difference between a Liberal and a Tory.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — It's a budget of dishonesty; it's a budget of deceit; it's a budget without heart; it's a budget without hope. I will therefore watch with great interest the participation of the PC members in this debate. Which ones among them will defend their broken promises?

(1930)

Now I ask the Premier and I ask the ministers, take a look

at northern Saskatchewan as a region of Saskatchewan that needs extra attention. One only has to go into northern Saskatchewan to realize the isolation that we live in up in northern Saskatchewan, and the higher cost of food. And what do we get from this government?

We had a food transportation subsidy, \$250,000 a year, and they cut that off. That, Mr. Speaker, is something that the back-benchers of this government, I don't think, can defend when they can hand out money to other large corporations that I will get to later on in my speech.

Medical services. They're cutting back in medical services. Up in our region we had eight psychiatric nurses; seven of them are gone — totally wiped out. And I tell you, in times right now when things are hard, that was a very important part of medical services, and it's just about totally eliminated.

We know what's happened to the dental programs. They talk about that the dental program in northern Saskatchewan is not going to be touched, that they're going to leave it the way it is. But I say to me, Mr. Speaker, and to the ministers across, that that's not exactly the way it is, because the day after it was announced there was a dentist into the schools taking a look at the equipment that we have in our schools. When they were told that it wasn't for sale in northern Saskatchewan they said, well, we're going to be setting up here in the North.

So to say that the North is exempt from the dental cuts is absolutely not true. What you state in your budget is that where there is dentists, that the program will be gone. And that's what's going to happen. They're going to buy all this equipment, not just in northern Saskatchewan. Dentists all across this province are going to be taking millions and millions of dollars of dental equipment out of our schools, including the North. And it'll be fire sale. It'll be same as the Department of Highways, what they done with the Department of Highways equipment. And, Mr. Speaker, you know what happened to that.

It's difficult living in northern Saskatchewan and I ask the ministers over there to realize that we are in a region of isolation. We're a long way ways from dentists. When the folks up there have to go and get a tooth filled, it sometimes means a drive of 4 and 500 miles return. If I use La Loche, for an example, it's a 400-mile journey down to get a tooth filled. And that's pretty tough.

Transportation. When you take the west side in the constituency that I represent, after you get past Meadow Lake, there's absolutely no public transportation. There's no bus lines, there's no airlines. There's very few jobs, and when we take a look at the hardships that are being encountered in northern Saskatchewan and we see that they've now put on 32 cents a gallon extra on the gasoline . . . And I might add that up in my constituency it's not unnormal to be paying 50 cents a litre for gas, 52 cents in some of the towns. And if you get up into the very far north, then it's even higher than that. Then you add the extra 7 cents on there and this is tough.

I've written many letters to the ministers and I've written to the Premier, and I've asked them to go into northern Saskatchewan and spend some money to set up some

small saw mills. We have millions and millions of board feet of timber up in northern Saskatchewan, over-mature timber, and it's not being touched. And we could create many jobs by going in there and setting up small saw mills.

I've asked for fish processing plants and that still hasn't happened, and better health services and better educational services. What the Northerners are asking for is a fair deal. They ask you to realize that they live in an isolated part of Saskatchewan. And they want some security, the same as anybody else in this province, and they deserve that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a look at the budget we're debating here today, and I want to touch on just how we got into this mess. When you take a look at 1982 when this government took over from the NDP, we left them with \$139 million in the bank. We left them with a Heritage Fund that the assets were worth over \$1 billion. And if you just take a look, in five short years this government has taken a \$139 million surplus and they've turned it into an approximately \$3.5 billion deficit. Now that didn't just happen by accident things haven't got that bad. We have to take a look at how they accomplished this. And I imagine they've worked pretty hard at it.

First of all there was massive give-aways and holidays and tax holidays to the oil companies of well over \$1 billion since they've taken government. And if we had that \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, back in general revenue to build hospitals and to build schools — and I see the Minister of Highways sitting there — to build much needed highways, our deficit would not be that low. Because if we had people working, building the hospitals and building the roads and building the schools, then they would be generating taxes. But that has gone the other way.

They started off, as I indicated there, \$1 billion in the oil companies. They started off kind of small there in the coal-mining industry. They got rid of the drag-line that was owned by the province of Saskatchewan. Another \$30 million, and that went to Alberta, to Manalta Coal. It didn't take long and they sold the whole coal-mine. That was over \$300 million more. They sell the drag-line and they sell the coal-mine and then lease it back for 30 years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you know very well, and you're a business man, you're a successful farmer, that that's not the way you operate. You're not going to sell your farm and lease it back. But this is what they did.

And it goes on and on. Pioneer Trust, wages to political friends. Some of them, Mr. Hill, who is the president of Sask Power, \$200,000 a year. That's a lot of money. Dennis Ball, \$95,000 a year, part-time job, compensation board. Now those are big bucks. And we take a look at Peter Pocklington, a millionaire from Alberta, \$10 million, outright grant, \$21 million signed for by this government.

Then we get to the big ones. Then we get to Weyerhaeuser corporation of Tacoma, Washington. Then we're talking in the big dollars. And this is how we

got into this problem. This is how we got into the financial mess that we have in Saskatchewan. It's mismanagement.

One has to go back and take a look at the budget that was brought in here a number of years ago, I believe it was, the second budget brought in by the Conservative government. And the next day the minister of Highways, he gets up in the House and he announces that 220 individuals were fired, 220 families literally destroyed — didn't know that it was coming. Then what do they do? They auction off our highway equipment, assets to this province, part of the assets — \$40 million worth of equipment sold for less than \$6 million dollars. Most of it went out of the province, and that's why our highway system is in such a mess today.

And it goes on and on, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't stop. They're getting rid of our campsites, our public campsites. And citizens of this province and this country, and our neighbours to the South, have used these public campsites for many years. They are now gone. Many of them are closed up or given to political friends.

The sales tax, the dental plans, the flat tax, the gas tax, which is going to create one of the biggest bureaucracies and nightmares that you've ever seen in the province, and it's already starting when you go to the gas stations . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — What we need in Saskatchewan is more jobs, not less, Mr. Speaker. What we need in Saskatchewan, and the people are asking for it, is security, not fear. Families now in this province live in fear. Fear that they will not be able to provide a good education for their children; fear that the health system is going down the drain, the dental program; fear that they will not be able to send their sons and daughters to university; fear that the trade schools are closing down. And we have to just take a look at Kelsey where there'll be 500 less students this fall, Mr. Speaker — 500 less students, 134 teachers fired in one day. They didn't know they were going to get fired. They walked in and went to work and they got their papers that they were gone. There's a fear that their sons and daughters are going to be unemployed and that creates fears of drug abuse and alcohol. It brings all the problems out. Families are living in fear. They see no future.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and you know very well that it was not always like that. This province when this government, Conservative government, took over, took over a government with an unemployment rate of 4 per cent. And that's just about zero when you consider 4 per cent and take a look at what it is today.

I now want to turn to another item and I ask this government to take this very seriously, and it's regarding, Mr. Speaker, a serious accident that happened in the Regina AgriDome last winter, when young Brad Hornung was injured in a hockey accident — and it was a serious accident, and I'm sure that we all feel bad about that. It wasn't three, four days later that the mayor of Regina made a statement, that had the goal at that arena been moved out a little bit farther, that accident would not have taken place. And he indicated he did not know that much

about hockey, but he felt that the accident would not have happened. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the ministers, and especially to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Finance and to the Premier, that that is true. If that arena had been the size of the European rinks, that accident would not have happened.

I want to give you an example. The ice surface of the AgriDome and most rinks in the NHL (National Hockey League) and around our province and around Canada are 200 feet long and 85 feet wide. If you take a look at the European rinks, they average 210 feet long and most of them are 100 feet wide. So you have 15 feet wider and you have 10 to 20 feet . . . Some of the European rinks are 220 feet.

And I think that Saskatchewan can be a leader in this area. I think that they have to put some money out. Saskatoon is a good example right now. This government has put \$25 million in to that new arena, and I think that this government should take the initiative and meet with Saskatoon and meet with other arenas around the province, with the folks, and say that we will provide part of the money — or you could put it all in there — and let's extend these rinks. Let's extend these rinks to the European size, to the Olympic size. Let's change some of the rules. We all know that in Europe, as I indicated, there's very few accidents compared to the serious accidents that we have because their ice surface is longer and the goals are out farther.

There's also another very important part, and that is in the European hockey, they don't ice the puck. Once that puck has crossed a red line, it's automatically iced and it's gone back. You don't have two players racing to the end of the boards. And that's where we're getting a lot of our violence in hockey, is this rule. And I think Saskatchewan can be a leader in changing that. That's something that we have to take a serious look at — 99.9 per cent of the times the puck goes back to the other end anyway. But when they go to the end of the boards, it just causes an accident and it causes a lot of violence.

And I ask this government, through you, Mr. Speaker, to take a look at this and act on it, put some money in there. It'll provide jobs, it'll provide a lot of . . . And the main thing is safety for our hockey players, young and old. And if we can be a leader, I think that's very important, because when you take a look at hockey in Saskatchewan, it's just so important. Some of the great, and as far as I'm concerned, the greatest hockey player that ever skated came out of Saskatchewan, and I speak of Gordie Howe. And I'm sure he would agree with that.

(1945)

We've got to stand up and we've got to fight. We've got to take a look at the officiating, and I would ask that we take a look at the officiating. And once we can expand our rinks to the Olympic size and the European size, and change some of the rules of the cross checking, I think that we're going to be on the right track. And I ask, you, Mr. Speaker, and through you, to the Premier and the Minister of Health, and the member from Turtleford, the Minister of Culture, to take a serious look at that and go out and sell that. And let's be a leader in Saskatchewan in that, and

let's not have any more of the serious accidents that we saw with young Brad Hornung. Let's try and curb it.

I also want to close off and indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that if you go from the north of this province to the south, and from the east to the west, everywhere in this province there is fear. Whether you are a farmer, a logger, a fisherman, young or old, sick or poor, and yes, even the well-to-do, have the same fears. There is a human disaster out in Saskatchewan. It's a jungle. And I tell you, it's getting worse day by day. And you just have to take a look at some of the programs that I spoke about.

And I ask, I ask the private members, the Conservative members who sit in the back benches, I ask you to stand up and fight back. I ask you to get up in this House and say your piece. Don't sit back and allow this type of a situation that's taking place in Saskatchewan to happen. You did not campaign on the fact that you were going to increase the sales tax, and you were going to put the gasoline tax on. You did not campaign on the fact that we were going to have all these massive firings, and we were going to get rid of the dental plan. That's not what you campaigned on. And I ask the private members to stand up, to stand up for this province and don't let it be destroyed by huge give-aways and broken promises. It's time for the back-benchers of this government to stand up and be counted, and I ask you to do that.

Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned, I shall be opposing the main motion and I shall be supporting the amendment put forward by my colleague from Regina North East.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Speaker, since my first election to public office in 1974, I have witnessed many budgets, some in Ottawa and some in Saskatchewan; some of them Liberal, some of them NDP, some of them Conservative; some of them in good times, and some of them in bad; some of them by governments at the zenith of their power, and some of them by governments in trouble.

But, Mr. Speaker, I have never ever seen any previous budget, or any previous budget process, so utterly devoid of those fundamental values which have until now been characteristic of the Saskatchewan way of life. With what I believe to be a clear majority of Saskatchewan people, I'm disgusted at this budget, Mr. Speaker, and at the government which presented it.

The government and the budget have failed Saskatchewan in four critical counts. First, there's the test of honesty. How as it honest, Mr. Speaker, for this government deliberately and cynically to miscalculate Saskatchewan's pre-election financial position last year, not just by a little bit, but by a full 200 per cent? How is it honest now, Mr. Speaker, for this government to reverse itself 180 degrees on the propositions that it advanced in last fall's election?

On the day the writ was issued to launch that campaign, I laid out some of the facts, Mr. Speaker, describing in detail the financial mess Saskatchewan was in at that time. The Premier responded then, and throughout the

campaign, that there was no big problem — not to worry, he said, the deficit is not an issue; everything's just fine. He said it over and over again.

But since the beginning of 1987 he's been singing exactly the opposite tune. The deficit is now a crisis. It demands Draconian action. That's what he says today. And when the Premier is asked to explain the obvious contradiction in that, Mr. Speaker, he just smiles and says, well, we're all politicians; we only tell our side of the story; people wouldn't expect us to tell the whole truth. That's his answer.

When this legislature resumed last Wednesday I asked the Premier if that was his official policy, and I invite Saskatchewan to read his answer with care. He specifically did not deny that misrepresentation was, in fact, the deliberate strategy. On the test of honesty, Mr. Speaker, this government has clearly failed Saskatchewan.

The second test is competence. This government has been in office now for just over five years. They've presented six budgets. Every single one of them has been a deficit for a total accumulated sea of red ink now of \$3.4 billion. How is that competent? How is that good management?

They have caused five consecutive devaluations of Saskatchewan's international credit rating less than two years. The prestigious world credit rating agencies have repeatedly panned this government's weak and foolish management. The warning alarms have been ringing loud and clear for a long time, but this government chose to fiddle while Rome burned. They ignored the problem, and like a cancer, it grew and grew.

The ultimate irony, Mr. Speaker, came last September on the even of the election. At that time Saskatchewan had just suffered its third consecutive credit rating tumble, and within 24 hours, within 24 hours of that devaluation, the Premier was announcing a new and particularly profligate spending program — his so-called housing program adding hundreds of millions of dollars more to the deficit.

That program, Mr. Speaker, was clearly a pre-election gimmick trotted out at the last minute to compete with the NDP housing promises that had already been made. It was part of that unconscionable bidding war between the PCs and the NDP, the spend now and the pay later twins.

Every impartial analysis shows that that program — the housing program — has failed economically. It has not created new jobs, and it's had a twisting and a distorting economic impact.

Mr. Speaker, it's not a fair program. If you rent or if you can't cough up the matching dollars, you don't qualify; and it uses public dollars to subsidize private luxuries like the hot tubs and the Jacuzzis. Further, the program was rushed into effect by dubious means from a legal point of view. And I'll be very interested to see what the Provincial Auditor has to say about that.

But most important, it's going to add some \$500 million

to Saskatchewan's debt load — half a billion dollars, Mr. Speaker, on top of the debt burden Saskatchewan already had. And what's the government's defence to all of this? Well they imply argue that the program is popular. That still doesn't make it right. Clearly, on the test of competence, this government has failed Saskatchewan.

The third test, Mr. Speaker, is fairness. Yes, I believe Saskatchewan people want a government that is, in fact, fiscally responsible. I believe they want a government that is lean and efficient. I believe they want that deficit brought under control. But at the same time people demand fairness and justice in how that job is done. What's unacceptable is this government's cruel double standard.

Since the beginning of this year, look at their hit list. Look at the people that they have freely chosen to victimize — the elderly, the sick, children and young families, battered women, the handicapped, K to 12 students and their teachers, post-secondary students and their teachers, nurses, doctors, dental therapists, hospitals, nursing homes, home care, school boards, municipalities, native people, and farmers. That's just a partial list of the victims, Mr. Speaker. And while all these areas of vital human concern are being slashed, they continue to spend lavishly on patronage, on untendered contracts. On government advertising, on the biggest and the most expensive political support staff in the history of Saskatchewan, on the opulent government offices, on executive expense accounts, on travel junkets, and a host of freebie give-aways.

Where's the justice, Mr. Speaker, in these twisted and perverted priorities? On the basic test of fairness, again this government has failed Saskatchewan.

And finally the fourth testis vision. There's no evidence in this budget, or in the government's conduct in the past six months, that they have any capacity to see beyond the ends of their noses. Their whole record since 1982 has been one of lurching clumsily from one crisis to the next. Without the ability to envisage the future, they are prisoners of panic politics. And their predicament is compounded by the tangled web of deception that they have chosen to weave for themselves by failing in the past to acknowledge the truth.

What this government has done since the beginning of this year is enshrouded Saskatchewan in a pall of gloom — an atmosphere of pessimism and despair. Saskatchewan people are bewildered and frustrated and frightened. The conduct of this government has shaken Saskatchewan's self confidence and our faith in our future. And this budget does nothing to relieve that anxiety. This government has no compelling blueprint or agenda for lifting Saskatchewan out of its malaise. There's no game plan to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps.

Within the discipline of fiscal responsibility, Mr. Speaker, there are many bold and exciting things we could be doing now to position ourselves for the 1990s and for the 21st century, but that would require a government with the foresight to see a Saskatchewan tomorrow as it ought to be, and that kind of government we simply do not have today.

How can you soar with eagles when you are ruled by turkeys? Or to put it more grandly, Mr. Speaker, how can valid plans be laid for tomorrow by those who have no capacity to live or to cope with today? This government is shackling Saskatchewan's future, and on the test of vision, it has again failed Saskatchewan.

Honesty, competence, fairness, and vision. I believe they're four vital tests, and on all four I believe this government has failed.

The Minister of Finance has done for the Devine government what Jack the Ripper did for door-to-door salesmen. And make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, it's the Finance minister who is very much in charge of this debacle. He's the boss. He's running the show over there. He has finally reached the top of the mountain. He doesn't have the Premier's title, but he might as well have, and that's a thought that should make a few Tories tremble.

I'm duty bound, Mr. Speaker, to offer some advice to my PC friends across the way. You'd better take charge and regain control again in a big hurry because this minister is going to be the architect of your destruction. Take it from someone who's seen him operate. He's well on his way to tearing you apart. For the moment he has absolute control over there, and that is a sure formula for disaster.

At least some of the PC members know the danger they're in, Mr. Speaker. I know they know because they've told me so, and they're very uneasy. They were elected, Mr. Speaker, especially the new members, on a platform that was all positive, all sweetness and light. Everything was buoyant and upbeat. There's so much more we can be; we're going to be number one; give 'er snooze, Bruce; don't yell whoa in a mud hole; open for business; partnership for progress; keep on building—those were the slogans, or some of them. Never a discouraging word. And I can imagine, Mr. Speaker, how warm and how wonderful those new PC members must have felt on election night last October. They were on top of the world. Everything was going to be coming up roses, and what a job they were going to do for their constituencies and for Saskatchewan.

(2000)

Now it's eight months later and some of these new members must be feeling like they were elected under false pretences. All that hope and that optimism is gone. Gone is all the upbeat rhetoric. Gone is all the confidence and that positive passion about the future. Everything the government has done since December has contradicted its election theme

And it's not the fault, Mr. Speaker, of those new members in the back benches. They've largely been shut out—everybody knows that. They've had to read the bad news in the media like everybody else. What's been happening is not their idea because they weren't consulted. But they are government members, and they have a special responsibility, Mr. Speaker, now, in stopping this government from destroying all that is so fine and so good about Saskatchewan. Those new members cannot be

blamed for starting the carnage but they can, and they will, be blamed if they fail to stop it.

At this very moment those new PC members are the most powerful people in Saskatchewan. They now control the fate of oh so many human lives. The hopes and the dreams, the faith and the trust of thousands of Saskatchewan people are in their hands, and it's an awesome responsibility. What they do with that responsibility will affect the course of Saskatchewan history.

Now they may choose to sit there and to do nothing, and I know the heat is on for them to do just that. The PC political press gangs have been hard at work, rough and tumble, trying to keep everyone in line. It takes a lot of courage to stand up against that kind of pressure. It's not easy to resist. The pressure can be intimidating; it can be seductive. It's so much easier and convenient to give in, to shut out the anguished cries of Saskatchewan people for help and to retreat behind the comfortable confines of PC party solidarity. That's the easy choice, the comfortable pew, it's the path of least resistance. Keep your head down, ignore reality, shut out the truth when the truth hurts and hope the pain that's out there across Saskatchewan these days will somehow just pass away.

Those new PC members may well choose that course. It's their decision, but those who give in and fall in line for the sake of political convenience will forfeit their place in history. They will be remembered only as the faceless, nameless ones who went down with the ship—and make no mistake, my friends, your ship is sinking; it's wallowing very low in the water. You can make history by standing up now for what's good and what's right for Saskatchewan or you can be the victim of history, forgotten as fast as Saskatchewan can eradicate the bitter memory of this administration.

Some of these new PC members may well be saying to themselves: I'd like to stand up and speak out; I know the government is wrong; I'd like to do something about it; but what's the use? What can one person do all by themselves?

Mr. Speaker, may I quote for you General Andrew Jackson, a famous American patriot and soldier and statesman. When he faced that question, this was his response: "One man with courage makes a majority." It's that kind of courage that Saskatchewan needs today, that kind of principle, that strength of purpose and personal conviction, that commitment to honesty and integrity, that sense of fairness and justice, that vision of what Saskatchewan ought to be.

Never mind the numbers. With courage, one is enough and the majority will follow. Indeed that majority is developing right now. You could see it if you chose not to close your eyes. You could see it last Saturday when thousands of Saskatchewan people rallied around the legislature to voice their profound anxiety. It was the biggest demonstration of public outrage in the modern history of Saskatchewan. It reflects the deepening anger among ordinary Saskatchewan people. Only the most naïve would choose to ignore that message, and there have been other messages too.

I know we all saw the tragic pictures, Mr. Speaker, on national television about 10 days ago — pictures of those sobbing dental therapists and assistants whose careers and lives had just been shattered by the dismantling of the dental plan. That pain and anguish are not what Saskatchewan should be all about. Neither is the deception inherent in the government's announcement of the dental plan cuts for elementary school children. They say they will save money, Mr. Speaker, but we know by the government's own calculations that that's simply not going to be true. The changes they have made are going to result in costs at least as great as under the old plan. Savings will accrue, Mr. Speaker, only if those elementary school children in fact do not get the dental care that they need. And that's what the government is banking on and the proof is in their own documentation. In the process, 400 dedicated, productive, cost-efficient careers have been destroyed.

I visited with some of those dental therapists and assistants who served so well in communities in my constituency of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I have seen how devastated they are, Mr. Speaker.

I have visited with senior citizens in Pioneer Lodge in Assiniboia, and I have seen them reduced to tears as their meagre fixed incomes have been confiscated by the massive rental increase imposed by this government.

I have met with students in Regina and Saskatoon and elsewhere, and I have heard how their future have quite literally evaporated before their very eyes; how they can't now get the classes they need and want; how they can't afford the higher tuition; how they can't find a job to help them pay for the higher tuition; and if they are in university and they do get a degree, how it may not be worth the paper it's written on from a downgraded institution.

I have met with the parents of young families in Humboldt and Unity and Melville and Melfort, and they've told me of their fears about the future for their children — a lesser quality of local education, lower standards in local health care and social services, and a general undermining of their local quality of life.

I have spoken with battered women, Mr. Speaker, in Prince Albert and Moose Jaw — women in the most desperate of circumstances. And I've seen the terror in their eyes as they may have no place to go for safety and security, thanks to this government. I've spoken with the parents of handicapped children who no longer have access to some of the care and the services they need. I've spoken with the mothers of diabetic children and others with special diseases who may be losing their doctors all because of this government. I've met with the elderly and the chronically ill and young families who will see their personal costs for prescription drugs balloon to hundreds of dollars or more, right up front, before they can get a prescription filled.

These, my friends, are just some of the costs, some of the real, live, human costs of what this government has freely decided to do. And those who choose to vote for this budget are voting for all these consequences. And you

can't escape that responsibility. And again I ask those PC members, especially the new ones, if that's what their careers in public life are going to be all about.

Last month, Mr. Speaker, I received a letter written to the Premier by a lady in Saskatoon. She started her letter by saying that she was very unhappy, very unhappy with the way Saskatchewan was going under this government. She said she was, in fact, a conservative, Mr. Speaker, but found it very hard to be proud of that. It was a plain letter, but a powerful one, as she documented her distress — an eloquent statement of personal concern from within the Conservative Party — and she's certainly not alone.

This former PC party member, in her letter, made reference to a speech delivered in this Assembly in 1981 by the PC MLA for Souris-Cannington, who is now the Deputy Premier. He was setting out the PC party manifesto for the 1982 election campaign. And I took the time, Mr. Speaker, to look up that speech in *Hansard*, and it's no wonder that there's concern and the sense of betrayal today among many well-meaning Conservatives.

And let me refresh your memory of what the MLA for Souris-Cannington said back in 1981 — December 1, 1981, to be exact — as recorded in *Hansard*, beginning at page 82. And I'll just hit the highlights. Here are some of the things he suggested. Number one:

Defeated . . . candidates and hirelings have become an elite (in government). They are the bunglers, while the honest, career civil servants are frustrated and powerless.

Number two:

. . . sophisticated, slick, expensive advertising campaigns (have) no other purpose except the purpose of brainwashing the people of Saskatchewan . . . The money spent on advertising is wasted . . .

Number three:

Look at what is happening to medicare . . . doctors are leaving. Nurses are dissatisfied and frustrated. Patients are not getting the treatment they need when they need it. This is politics at its worst, at the expense of human suffering.

. . . Put your money where your mouth is and get your health care standards back up where they belong.

Number four:

. . . thousands of Saskatchewan citizens are not free to express their views openly. The people who in some way are dependent upon the (NDP) government are afraid.

Number five, Mr. Speaker:

. . . a Conservative government would remove the sales tax.

This is the most regressive tax there is. It is a tax that falls heavily on the working person.

Number six:

We would have a 10 per cent across-the-board reduction in provincial income tax.

Number seven:

We must restore the human factor to government — people first. I give you my word that a Conservative government will always think in terms of human need. We cannot and will not tolerate economic policies that eliminate human dignity.

Number eight:

The . . . Conservative party . . . is committed to co-operate with the native people in northern Saskatchewan to develop their own future in a meaningful way and erase the dismal failures to date.

Number nine:

. . . In the field of education there are not enough funds . . . denying capable young men and women access to educational opportunities of their choice. The combination of denying students their first or their second choice of a field of study, and increasing the size of classes or sections of classes is hardly an acceptable response . . .

And number ten:

The senior citizens of our province have not received a fair deal . . . the Progressive Conservative Party stands for the rights of every elderly citizen.

I find it simply unacceptable that senior citizens should have to pay a fee for prescription drugs in this province. A Conservative government would guarantee that no senior citizen would see his lifetime savings taken away because he decided, or needed, to live in a nursing home.

That was 1981, Mr. Speaker, the speech of the hon. member for Souris-Cannington and now the Deputy Premier.

There is more. There is so much more, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to review out of those 1981 remarks of the member for Souris-Cannington, but what I've just referred to should suffice. Since 1981 until now something has gone terribly wrong within this PC government. And I am prepared to bet that the MLA for Souris-Cannington really, in his heart, still believes what he said in 1981.

I don't think he's changed his mind. What's changed, Mr. Speaker, is simply this: he has lost the internal power struggle within the cabinet. He has lost to the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance has shouldered him

aside like so many others, and it's really no wonder the Deputy Premier is looking for a career change.

But the Deputy Premier's discomfort, Mr. Speaker, is minor compared to the pain that's being inflicted upon so many others in Saskatchewan by the government of which he is member. I referred a moment ago to that letter from a PC party supporter in Saskatoon, disappointed and angry as she was. It is just one of the dozens that have come into my office, Mr. Speaker, from Conservatives, and from others, to express their dismay at this government and this budget.

(2015)

Now I wish I could read all of them into the record. They constitute powerful testimony against this budget, just like the thousands who turned out to protest on Saturday.

But I'll refer, Mr. Speaker, to just one more — this one from a young woman, born and raised in Saskatchewan, and now completing her final education in Ontario. She has, or at least she had, every intention of returning home to Saskatchewan to pursue her career and her adult life here, to give back to Saskatchewan the best that she had to offer. Her letter exemplifies what the Premier used to talk about so fondly, in terms of the pride and strength of Saskatchewan families. They, he said, are the foundation of our very way of life. Remember what he used to say? We're going to bring our sons and daughters home to Saskatchewan, and we're going to do it with education and careers and jobs and opportunity and hope.

But after the last six months, Mr. Speaker, much of that is gone. The young women who wrote this letter will not now be coming home. She's not alone. She represents hundreds, if not thousands of others, going from Saskatchewan for ever because this government has destroyed their enthusiasm and their idealism, because this government is saying no to their dreams and their hopes for tomorrow. What a colossal waste, Mr. Speaker. That's what this budget represents, and that's why it is so very wrong.

I want to deal with the myth, Mr. Speaker, that rural Saskatchewan has somehow mostly escaped unscathed from the hurt of the past six months, because it's just not true. It is a carefully cultivated misconception fostered by the government, but it's not true. Look at the list of what rural Saskatchewan has suffered: a 25 per cent cut in the Department of Agriculture, the most, I think, of any department; the best people in the Department of rural Development are gone; support for agricultural societies is phased out, including the backing for the 4-H clubs; access to soil testing is being reduced; pest control programs have been cut; so has the support for agricultural machinery testing.

There's less backing for veterinary districts and for initiatives to protect the health of animals and poultry. The farm purchase plan is gone. Rural policing has been reduced; so have regional libraries. All municipalities and school boards have been cut back, increasing the pressure on local mill rates. The gas and sales tax increases are just going to add to that pressure. Reneging

on the EDF (education development fund) fund for school programs will hit especially hard in rural schools. The combined impact of these factors means that schools like those at Rockglen and Coronach will have higher enrolments next year, Mr. Speaker, higher enrolments, but fewer teachers and thinner services.

The cuts in post-secondary education mean that many rural students cannot now take the courses at university or technical school that they had planned and prepared for. Rural people feel the loss of accessibility and quality in community colleges.

The slashing of the dental plan is especially hurtful in rural areas, even more so than in the cities. Good local careers have been destroyed, and children just won't get the dental care they need.

And for rural senior citizens the cuts are deep and broad. The rental increases in nursing homes, the higher cost of prescription drugs, the home care reductions, the pain, Mr. Speaker, is very real.

This budget is not just an urban problem, it's a Saskatchewan problem. And rural people are hurting too. One way or another, almost everyone in Saskatchewan is a victim, except the most privileged, who are the closest to the PC party.

Is all of this, Mr. Speaker, what those new PC members came into public life to do? To scar and to disfigure the familiar, friendly face of Saskatchewan? I cannot believe that that was their intention. I cannot believe that this Minister of Finance represents their true feelings. That's why the doubts and the anxiety across the way continue to gnaw, at least at some of them.

And there's another reason, too. Because this government is destroying the good reputation of free enterprise, they call themselves a business-like government. But they're giving business a bad name. What they're doing and how they're doing it will send out the wrong messages to Saskatchewan about a non-socialist approach in government. The message from the Devine government about free enterprise is that it doesn't work, and it cannot be trusted. Is that what you want to say to Saskatchewan about the free enterprise system?

That system, at its best, should be the epitome of honesty and competence and fairness and vision. The message should be strong and positive. It should be bold and exciting. It should be bursting with hope and with optimism and high expectations about the future.

But this government, Mr. Speaker, represents the opposite of that, and in the process, they're demanding what free enterprise should be all about.

And I invite some of those uneasy PC members across the way to consider that hard reality. By propping up a bad budget, by propping up a bad government, you're hurting the free enterprise system. You're giving a boost to the NDP. Is that what you really want? I think not.

An Hon. Member: — That's not a bad idea.

Mr. Goodale: — And speaking of the NDP . . . yes, Herman, it is a bad idea. And speaking of the NDP, I was interested to hear the remarks on Friday of the NDP financial critic, the member for Regina North East.

In the midst of his speech, he turned his attention to me and the Liberal Party, and he spent a fair chunk of his time attacking us. And I want to thank him for that. I'm grateful for the compliment. You don't attack what you're not concerned about. And his attack says loud and clear that Liberals are continuing to grow in stature in the eyes of Saskatchewan people I know that's true, and the member for Regina North East has confirmed it in his remarks. He accused me in those remarks of being, I believe his words were, "less than honest." Well let me remind him that in last fall's election, the Liberals were, in fact, the only ones who were being honest with the people of Saskatchewan. The PCs and the NDP were pursuing a cynical, promise-them-anything mentality, and we said, in our party, no.

Remember how it was reported in the news media? The *Moose Jaw Times-Herald* said:

Goodale's approach to the upcoming election is the most responsible of the three major parties.

And the Regina *Leader-Post* said:

The Liberal campaign has been a much needed jolt of reality. The Liberals have taken the high road.

I won't bore you with my whole clipping service, but that gives you the flavour of what was said. And in the result, we doubled our popular vote, we re-entered this legislature, and we dumped a New Democrat in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goodale: — The public opinion polls toward the end of that campaign were very interesting. They said our issue of fiscal responsibility moved way up — because of us moved way up — to be the second most important concern in the minds of voters. The polls said the Liberals had made the biggest gains during the campaign with respect to credibility and leadership. And 75 per cent of Saskatchewan people said this province would be better off with Liberals in the legislature once again.

And since that strong stand on fiscal responsibility during the election, Mr. Speaker, we have been completely straightforward with Saskatchewan people, maintaining the importance of that issue and indicating how we would seek to achieve it in contrast to the cruel and the unfair choices that have been made by this government.

The NDP take the view that, if you want to be compassionate, then you cannot be fiscally responsible. And the Conservatives take the view that, if you're going to be fiscally responsible, then you cannot be compassionate. According to these two parties, the qualities of compassion and fiscal responsibility are somehow mutually exclusive.

As a Liberal, I don't believe that needs to be the case. You can, and you must, achieve both simultaneously. It all depends, Mr. Speaker, on your priorities. It depends on the choices that you're prepared to make, and on your ability to spend, not just more, but to spend smarter, Mr. Speaker, in the best interests of Saskatchewan.

And it might be instructive for this Assembly to remember that the NDP do not come to this debate about the deficit and fiscal responsibility with clean hands. Remember that they were the ones in power in Saskatchewan during the bountiful years of the 1970s, with good commodity prices for oil and for grain and for potash and for uranium, and they blew that bounty in its entirety. They socked it all into the playthings and the power trip of a big and arrogant government, and they left nothing as a cushion for the future. That was hardly a demonstration of prudent management. And remember too that in last fall's election, the NDP actually managed — believe it or not, Mr. Speaker — they actually managed to out-promise the Conservatives. It was a struggle, but they did it. And if all their promises were to be implemented, this Devine deficit today would be a few hundreds of millions of dollars worse.

The member for Regina North East would be well advised to remember those things. He's also be well advised maybe to tone down the arrogance in his rhetoric. That's an awful problem for the NPD. They believe they somehow have the market cornered on decency and compassion. They strut about with their noses in the air, secure in the knowledge that they, and only they, have earned the right to be self-righteous. A little humility and some common sense would do them a world of good.

But the immediate concern, and the first challenge, Mr. Speaker, is to stop the harm that this government is inflicting upon Saskatchewan. This is a time for some real soul-searching on the part of those new PC members across the way. Do they hear, Mr. Speaker, what their friends and their neighbours are saying back home? Do they read their mail? Do they answer their phone calls? Do they see the hundreds and now, Mr. Speaker, the thousands who are protesting at public meetings and demonstrations? Do they hear the message that so many people are trying to send? I believe they do, Mr. Speaker. The question is, what are they prepared to do about it? Will those new PC members choose to ignore reality, and quietly vote for this budget and all its pain? Or will they rise to the occasion, demonstrating their courage and their integrity?

This is their time, Mr. Speaker, to make their mark. For better or for worse, this is their time. This is their time to shape the Saskatchewan of tomorrow. Will it be a tomorrow of meanness and despair, as reflected in the images of those sobbing dental therapists on television and the silent weeping of this government's countless other victims?

Or will it be, Mr. Speaker, as it could be, a Saskatchewan of hope, a Saskatchewan of honesty and courage, a Saskatchewan of skill and competence, a Saskatchewan of fairness and justice, a Saskatchewan of vision and of destiny? Let them vote, Mr. Speaker. Let them vote surely for the latter and not the former. Let them vote not for this

budget, but for a far better and a far higher road.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honoured to participate in this debate because I believe in a sense it's a very historical debate.

First I would like to compliment our Finance minister on the budget, Mr. Speaker. And I was quite amused to hear the member from Gravelbourg giving our Finance minister a lesson in fiscal responsibility. When we remember when he was a member of the federal government, he was the party that left us with a \$50,000 per capita debt for every man, woman, and child in Saskatchewan.

(2030)

I hope our minister doesn't pay too much attention to that voice out of the wilderness. And I would suggest that he . . . Do not tighten your halo. Your halo will give you a headache . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

You're welcome. We anticipate the battle. This debate, Mr. Speaker, is the fundamental principles of our province, and whether or not our province will have a future. I do not say, Mr. Speaker, what kind of a future it will have, but if it will have a future at all.

And let me explain to you why I feel this so strongly. I do not have to repeat the economic conditions, and the serious economic situation we find ourselves in. Some people, perhaps those opposite, would try to deny that we have serious times and the economy is suffering. But it doesn't take much of a mathematician to figure out that when the prices of all your basic commodities go down, you are going to have fiscal difficulty. So that is a fact that I am not going to dwell on. What is important is what we should do about it.

We could do as the members opposite suggest, which is to increase taxes even more, and try not to reduce the great demand the government places on its people. We could spend more money, borrow more money until, like the government in Manitoba, we could owe \$10 billion, Mr. Speaker. We could do that, but we won't. We won't do that, Mr. Speaker, because it would be foolish. How can any thinking person suggest that by bankrupting this province we would somehow be able to improve services to our people? It can't happen, and it is a form of madness to suggest it.

The other option is to get our house in order, and in the process build a province and a government that is responsive to its people, that serves its people with the highest quality, that allows people to control their lives and encourages them to do so.

The other option, Mr. Speaker — our option — is to face the economic challenge squarely, fairly, and with courage to see that our people are protected; to set about diversifying our economy so that we might not face the same crisis in the future. And to accomplish these we will exercise fiscal responsibility and sound management.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I said this debate was an historic one. Let me give you some reasons why I think that is so. When this government came into office, it inherited a pretty sorry situation. They may complain on the other side, but, Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. They will complain loudly, but the facts are there if anyone wants to research them. No one was being protected in this province, and if you were protected, it was at a large personal cost.

The NDP had imposed a moratorium on the construction of nursing homes and our senior citizens were left without protection. Sure, they gave them \$25 a month under the Saskatchewan income plan, but how much protection is \$25?

The previous government had deserted the rural hospitals and the rural medical practices were almost non-existent, so the sick were left without much protection.

The previous government had cut funding to our schools and the university buildings were rotting on their foundations, so our children were left without protection. If a student wanted to go to university, the sums available for bursaries were paltry and there was no Saskatchewan student loan program, and there was no provision for assistance to single parents or women, Mr. Speaker. So the students were left without protection.

Mr. Speaker, if a day care was needed, there was a lot of difficulty getting that day care going and there was no funding for it anyway. So even our small children were left without protection.

Interest rates, Mr. Speaker, were higher than ever before in the history of this province. For them, Mr. Speaker, there was no protection. There was just no protection for almost anyone in the province.

Mr. Speaker, we came into office, this government came into office, and we immediately provided that protection. We, this government, built nursing homes; we put money into rural hospitals; we began to renew the universities; we protected people from high interest rates. We, this government, Mr. Speaker — and I'm sorry the member from Assiniboia has left us — this government increased seniors' income plan by 300 per cent. Yes, 300 per cent, Mr. Speaker. I think the member from Gravelbourg should take note of that.

We went to the aid of farm families, Mr. Speaker, and let them have their land back from a government that was intent on keeping it. We, this government, created the Saskatchewan student loan program and dramatically increased bursaries. We made special provision for single mothers wanting to attend university — this government, Mr. Speaker. We created the Opportunities program to create jobs for young people over the summer, and just in my own constituency alone there was 350 young people took advantage of that program, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we, this government, created the skills development program and the employment program to give social assistance recipients real jobs and real independence.

And in hundreds of other projects and programs, Mr.

Speaker, we set about trying to rebuild this province's basic system of protection. And it cost a lot of money. Now I'd like to address that specifically, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite say no, it did not cost anything. They say we are responsible for the deficit and providing services to people, and falling government revenues had nothing to do with it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we, this government, knows that's nonsense. However, let us say it wasn't. Let us say it was all our fault. So okay, you say it was our fault that we had this economic problem and then you say, don't do anything about it. You ruined it, but don't fix it. That just doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker. They admit there's a serious problem because they want to blame it on us. Yet they say, don't do anything about it. If it weren't so dangerous, Mr. Speaker, it would be laughable. They are dangerous because our elderly can be frightened, our sick can be confused, and our poor can be tyrannized; and those caring people on the other side are trying to do every one of those things. They're trying to frighten the elderly, confuse the sick, and tyrannize the poor. But this government, Mr. Speaker, will not tolerate the abuse of the vulnerable in our society.

And that is another reason, Mr. Speaker, why this debate is a historic one. The plan this government has is genuinely revolutionary in its content. At its most basic, the plan will provide protection for the people, development for the province, and sound government, fairly and with courage.

Let me give you a few examples, Mr. Speaker. Today, because of the commitment of this government, disabled people have a much greater say in their own lives. How's this, you might say, Mr. Speaker. Well I'll let you know. Under the government of the NDP, disabled people were viewed as wards of the state. And if you were mentally retarded you were locked up, away from the community in a government institution, although you had committed no crime. This government said, no more. As a first step, we are developing the retarded to become part of the community instead of forcing them out of it. As well, the physically disabled will now control a substantial part of their own services through the Saskatchewan Abilities Council.

I give you these two examples, Mr. Speaker, because they are fundamental to what this whole government is about. By giving people an opportunity to govern themselves we open up economic possibilities as well as personal ones.

Part of the government's plan, Mr. Speaker, is of course to gain control over spending. It is not our deepest desire to say to people, there is no more money. We do not take joy in reducing expenditures. It is a matter of pressing and compelling need.

Mr. Speaker, the government is acting responsibly, fairly, and courageously. It has reduced government spending in a fair and open manner. We did not hid the reductions and wait until the budget was completely ready. We told the people every day what decision was made and what that decision was. The government has gone to great lengths to ensure compassionate dealings with its employees.

And I ask you, Mr. Speaker . . . I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and those opposite, I will ask this question: how many people in the private sector would gladly take early retirement in these economic times? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, gladly.

So, Mr. Speaker, it just isn't right nor fair for some people to claim that we have been unfair or cavalier.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to take up a lot of time tonight, and I would just like to end with an important observation. Those people on the other side might well listen, and also the member from Gravelbourg. They seem to be a little short of quality people on the other side, and they keep wanting us to come over and join them. And I can understand why you need a little quality and a little bit of an upgrading over there.

But I came here, Mr. Speaker, I was elected in my riding as a Progressive Conservative member, because they support our plan and they support me as a candidate. And I will represent them, Mr. Speaker, to the best of my ability. And you can bet that includes supporting this government fully, completely, and supporting this budget quite loudly.

Mr. Speaker, from my remarks, you will understand that I will not support the amendment, but I will fully support the budget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have looked forward for quite some time to participate in this debate. We expected this debate to take place some time much earlier in the year, preferably in March or in the month of April, so there's a lot of material that we wish to go over.

And I was inspired by the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg to deviate a little bit from some of the comments that I was going to make this evening. And I couldn't believe in his own monotone hypocrisy when he started talking about fiscal responsibility. And I'm sorry the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg isn't here. He had to depart, I suppose, to meet with the rest of the Liberal caucus.

When he sat as a member of parliament in the House of commons under the Trudeau government, they invented fiscal irresponsibility, and which Canadians have had to suffer under ever since the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg was actually a member of the federal House of commons. And I think that the election time really portrays the hypocrisy even more, when the member went around the province preaching exactly what his Tory friends across the way are bringing into reality.

If he really wanted to do something for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I think he should invite directly, not beat around the bush and namby-pamby

about wanting some of the back-benchers over there to join his party; he should come right out and ask them directly. It would mean over \$100,000 to him in his budget because he'd officially become a caucus.

You see, the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg doesn't have any official status, other than an independent member here, and I'm sure you're aware of that, Mr. Speaker. He sits there as an independent member, speaks for himself and his constituents, which is justly so. But he would like very much to become an official party so that the Liberals could be represented in this legislature. And so, if he won't do it, I'd invite some of the back-bench Tories — go over and join him; they'll always take care of you; the Liberals always take care of their friends, just like the Conservatives always take care of their friends. So you move on over, move on over, make sure you get over there soon.

And I'm sure that the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has forgotten about when the Patterson government was in in Saskatchewan before 1944, and the economic state of the province at that time when we were virtually bankrupt and members of Tommy Douglas's cabinet had to sign personal guarantees for the province of Saskatchewan to operate. And then he must've also forgotten, Mr. Speaker, about the period from 1964 until 1971, the seven long, lean years, as Allan Blakeney refers to them as, when Ross Thatcher ran the province into the hole.

(2045)

And I challenge any of the members opposite or the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg got sit down with a set of economic statements and compare who's fiscally responsible in the Saskatchewan. The only party that's ever been fiscally responsible has been the New Democratic Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, I've waited a long time to get into this debate, so have the people of Saskatchewan. I think they demonstrated that on Saturday, when there were 7,000 or it could've been 5,000 or 10,000, but several thousand people come out to demonstrate in front of the Legislative Building to make some kind of impact on the Neanderthals that are sitting on the government side of the House, because that's almost how far we're going back, Mr. Speaker. It's been a betrayal to the people and the province of Saskatchewan.

What about election promises from 1982 and 1986 that most of you ran around the province campaigning on? You're going to eliminate the gas tax — it was a road tax on gasoline at that time — and in fact, you did that. But the money at that time went into two funds; it went into the auto insurance fund and it went into building roads in the Saskatchewan. What happens now? The big betrayal? You've brought back in the gas tax, but where does it go? It goes to paying off your deficit. The deficit you've created over the years that you've been in power in the province of Saskatchewan. And every year from 1982 until present, you've created irresponsibly large deficits in the province.

Well what are some of the other things that you've promised? You promised to reduce income tax by 10 per cent and to eliminate sales tax. Well in this budget on Wednesday, June 17, you increased the sales tax by 40 per cent — from 5 per cent to 7 per cent — a 40 per cent increase on sales tax.

What about income tax? Did you reduce it by 10 per cent? What's the big betrayal? Well, you brought in the flat tax, the very unfair flat tax. One per cent last year, another staged 1 per cent coming in this year, Mr. Speaker. And the reasons it's unfair is because it helps the wealthy more than it does the middle-income and the low-income people because the flat tax is taken off before the people even get to their basic exemptions on the income tax forms so you can deduct your tax shelters, your RRSPs (Registered Retirement Savings Plans), MURBs (Multiple Unit Residential Building) when they were in existence — very unfair. That's a betrayal to the people of Saskatchewan.

And the rural areas, well, when they came in in 1982 they said they had to have some sort of orderly transition of the family farm. They brought in the farm purchase program. Now that's been eliminated. That's a betrayal of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

Well look to other things in agriculture. What's the direction in agriculture, Mr. Speaker? What's the direction in agriculture? It's agri-business. There's more and more and more agri-business, and fewer and fewer and fewer farmers because the only farmers that can succeed right now are those that have been established for many years and have no debt, or those farmers who choose to work off the farm — either one spouse works in town teaching school or possibly the other spouse might drive truck during the winter or take on some other occupation. And combined-income farmers are the only real farmers in Saskatchewan that can succeed now, and certainly to get into farming they have to be combined-income farmers. So we don't want agri-business.

You have no plan for agriculture; you have no plan to save agriculture in the province of Saskatchewan, other than letting farmers go bankrupt and moving them into the cities and into the towns to further increase the unemployment problem we have in the province of Saskatchewan. That's a betrayal of Saskatchewan rural people, Mr. Speaker.

What else did they say? They said things like they would expand the prescription drug plan. Well, as we know, they've virtually eliminated the prescription drug plan as we know it. Elderly people, people who rely on prescription drugs, have to now pay their money up front, submit their receipts, and then get reimbursed. What a sad state of affairs. Many of the people who have to rely on drugs prescribed by doctors . . . is that they don't have the money to pay up front. Many, many people in Saskatchewan are very limited in their resources and they can't take into account another 70, another 100, in some cases a couple of hundred dollars to buy their drugs as they need them to preserve and take care of their health. And I think that's a sad state of affairs. So the biggest

betrayal, Mr. Speaker, has been actually in the area of medicare.

The one other promise that really rings a bell to me is the promise of free telephones for senior citizens. Remember the free telephones? Well — may she rest in peace — my grandmother died last August and when she passed away she was still waiting for her free telephone, just like every other senior out there is waiting for their free telephone. You lied to them — very well documented, a total lie to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. But as I say . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — Mr. Speaker, as a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Would the member state her point of order.

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — The member obviously is using unparliamentary language. I must say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the members opposite were cautioned earlier in the day about the use of unparliamentary language.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Well I would caution members not to use unparliamentary language. There's lots of words in the English language to allow good, orderly debate, and I'm sure that all members here are educated well enough to use the English language in that manner.

Mr. Anguish: — I respect that, Mr. Speaker, but I felt I wasn't referring to any individual member as a liar. And I won't use that again. In most places a lie is a lie, but if a lie isn't a lie in this Chamber, then I will not use that language again, Mr. Speaker, and I make that commitment to you.

Medicare is under attack, Mr. Speaker, and when members opposite say there is no respect, how do you expect people to respect people like yourselves on that side of the House when medicare is under attack. The Tories have said, it's a sacred trust; we would never touch medicare in the province of Saskatchewan. The sacred trust. Well, the sacred trust . . . On the 25th anniversary of medicare coming into place, Tommy Douglas, a pioneer in medicare; Woodrow Lloyd who actually brought it in; own leader, Allan Blakeney, who was at that time the Minister of Health — worked long and hard to develop that program that came in right across Canada. All Canadians then saw the wisdom, after the big fight took place in Saskatchewan, to bring in universal access to good quality health care for caring and sharing people in the province of Saskatchewan, and it spread across the country. And New Democrats built on that program in years after the 25th anniversary.

I think about the dental plan. Dental plan came in, and this budget has virtually eliminated the dental plan in the province of Saskatchewan. All the therapists that were trained are now out of work. It's going to cost us more, I predict, to go to dentists. Rural people won't go through the great inconvenience, in some cases, to bring their children in, if you live in a place like Goodsoil, to come into Meadow Lake, and if the dentists there are all booked, then the choice is to go to North Battleford.

And while children's teeth rot in the province of Saskatchewan, the Tories can say that they're being fiscally responsible. Well isn't that a great state of affairs, Mr. Speaker. You must be very proud of the government over there.

Another thing in medicare — chiropractic services, physiotherapy services. The Minister of Health in the House said today he hasn't said anything about cutting back on that. But why is it that in every physiotherapist's office, every chiropractor's office in the Saskatchewan, you go in there, there's either a petition or a notice hanging on the wall that effective July 1, there won't be any more than 12 treatments per year? And so if you need more than 12 treatments per year, too bad — you've got to take care of them yourself, Mr. Speaker. Well, that's a sad state of affairs for a party and a government that said that medicare was a sacred trust.

And I think that one of the bad things is the cuts in mental health. I know in the constituency I represent, we have the Saskatchewan Hospital — the only long-term institutional care facility in the province of Saskatchewan for mental health patients. And I know it's good. If people can be in society, they'd be in society. There are some people — and no one will ever convince me differently — there are some people in society that require long-term institutional care for mental health problems.

What happens at the Saskatchewan Hospital on early retirement? Sixty-two positions lost out of the Saskatchewan Hospital. How many are you going to refill? I hear that they've given permission to refill about 28 of those positions. The place is coming to a standstill.

Now on the thing of turning people out into the community that have some degree of mental health problems. That's fine, but there's only two community mental health nurses left to service the North Battleford area and the Lloydminster area, so that's great.

People go out into society, this caring, sharing society, and since the Tories won't provide any support services, these people have their backs against the wall, Mr. Speaker, when they get out into society. And they don't have their drug levels monitored, which many of them are on out in society. They don't have the care, they don't have the support services.

The biggest reason actually, though, to have mental health budgets increase is for the insanity on that side of the House, just a total insanity on that side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, Premier Devine said during the election campaign that if Tommy Douglas was alive today that he'd vote for him. If Tommy Douglas could, Mr. Speaker, and he's listening to what's going on in the province of Saskatchewan today, I would say that there'd be a big hand come out of the sky and smack Devine's government right into the dirt because Tommy Douglas wouldn't stand for it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — And the people in Saskatchewan aren't

going to stand for it either, Mr. Speaker.

We were sitting having a meal in the restaurant this evening with about four of my colleagues, and an elderly gentleman came along and he was wearing his Legion blazer. And he obviously knew that we were members of the legislature, and he came over and he shook each of our hands, and he said, is the legislature sitting this evening? And we said, yes, it is sitting this evening. We're going back there at 7 o'clock to debate the budget. And he said, that's good. He said, you give them all you've got. He said, I've been a Tory all my life, and I'll never vote for them again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — So people in Saskatchewan don't agree with what you're doing, and that'll be proven out. And if you want to go ahead and call an election, feel quite free to do so, feel quite free to do so.

And you members in the back benches hold the key to that. Just join the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, have this House fall, and see who wins the next election.

But the worst is to come in health care, Mr. Speaker. The worst is yet to come in health care, because in the budget the member from Qu'Appelle Lumsden says that, and I quote: "we intend to redefine the mandate of rural hospitals to accommodate the needs of the communities they serve." What does that mean? Well, the Minister of Health is going to set up his little commission. They're going to go around the province, and I predict they're going to be closing hospitals in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Caring, sharing society of the Tory Devines.

I'd like to turn for a few moments, Mr. Speaker, to talk about my critic area, which is Highways and Transportation. In the budget documents it's outlined here that there'll actually be an increase of about \$7 million in the Highways budget this year. That's on first examination of the estimates that were tabled in this House on Wednesday, June 17 — black Wednesday, or whatever you want to call it. So initially you look at that \$7 million increase for highways in the province of Saskatchewan.

But then you look at last year's supplementary estimates, because they didn't estimate quite correctly in the '86-87 fiscal year, so they re-estimated. And when they re-estimated, well, there's another \$10,450,000 they spent last year. So you've got to add that on to the '86-87 estimates and you find that there's no increase, no increase in the Highways budget.

(2100)

And then you go and you look a little further through here, because usually in the past we had a Department of Supply and Services, and the Department of Supply and Services always provided all the facilities for the government departments. And they say, well we've made them more efficient and we've wiped out a department there, but we've got a new corporation called the property management corporation so we can mortgage assets, sell things off, raise money for the government, pay

the Devine deficit.

Well, property management corporation . . . What have we got here? Oh, property management corporation. The Department of Highways this year has to pay them \$8,233,900. And so, when you get your pen out and start figuring, Highways and Transportation had a budget reduction this year — in this coming fiscal year, the one we're in right now — of \$11,757,070. Lost \$11 million off the budget. The member from Melfort is going to have to do something about building roads. They're deteriorating at a very rapid rate. What are we going to do about that?

Fiscally responsible? Well fiscally responsible . . . They announced the upgrading of the Yellowhead recently, said they were going to put it in as part of the Trans-Canada Highway system. I found it very interesting. The member from Melfort will be prepared, I'm sure, to answer this in estimates, but in part of the plan they're going to reconstruct six new bridges on the Yellowhead in Saskatchewan between the Manitoba border and the Alberta border. And they've budgeted a million dollars for that. Fiscally responsible. A million dollars — a million dollars for six bridges.

An Hon. Member: — It must be in U.S. funds.

Mr. Anguish: — Oh, it would have to be in U.S. funds. Fiscally responsible. I can't believe it.

The thing that really got me a whole lot though, Mr. Speaker, was the enthusiasm of everybody on the government side when the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden was giving his budget speech. There were members chewing gum and yawning and walking out the door, and the whip would go and find them and bring them back in. And the most enthusiastic of all, Mr. Speaker, had to be the member from Saskatoon Eastview. The hand was on the face during the entire presentation — couldn't seem to get the two of them to meet to do any clapping for the speech.

And then at the end, Mr. Speaker, it was really good. Were my colleagues watching the member from Saskatoon Eastview? He was sitting down in his seat and he got up when he saw everyone standing, clapped his hands, and back down again. Such enthusiasm! We loved it on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. It was really good. It was really good.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — Maybe he'll be the first one to join us.

Mr. Anguish: — Or resign. He could resign. We could have test by-election. I think that would be a very interesting experience. You know, don't hold him. If the member from Saskatoon Eastview wants to go, let him go. Don't let him cross the floor. Let's have a by-election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — One of the other members on the government side moved me to deviate from the presentation I wanted to give here this evening as well,

Mr. Speaker, and that was the member from Indian Head-Wolseley who really inspired me, because so far in the entire budget debate, he's the only one that didn't stand and read the speech that he had to present on the budget debate. Every other member has been reading their speech because they're defensive. They don't know what to say about it, so the caucus office writes their notes down. Word for word, what they're supposed to say — even some of the cabinet ministers that have spoke. Well I shouldn't say some because only there's only been two spoke — one read the speech, the other one winged it fairly well, member from Indian Head-Wolseley.

But the thing that moved me to say something about the speech from the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, the Minister of Tourism, Small Business and Co-ops — certainly an expanding department — was his comments towards Gainers and Vanguard, those two businesses that I welcome very much to The Battlefords. They've done a great deal for our economy in The Battlefords; they sincerely have. And I've never been critical of the business coming in. What I've been critical of is the financial package that this government across the way gave to attract Peter Pocklington to the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — And we want to see the documents. Show us the agreement with Peter Pocklington!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Is it true that you're paying \$7 for each pork belly that has to be imported into the province? Because they're all coming in from outside the province. You don't see many of the farmers rushing into pork production, Mr. Speaker, not very many of them. They require at the Gainers plant in North Battleford 50,000 pork bellies a week when they're running at full capacity. How many are there produced in the province? Oh, about 14,000, and they're all currently consumed, so they'll have to be imported. So tell us, is it true that you're subsidizing all the pork bellies that are coming in? Come on, confess! Show us the contracts. Show us the contracts you made with people at Gainers.

But the interesting thing that I wanted to say to the Minister of Tourism, Small Business, and Co-ops is that the government seems to put a great deal of emphasis on The Battlefords, and the people there truly appreciate that. And the local member, from the period of 1982 until 1986 worked very hard for his constituents — must have — because the Gainers plant . . . but most of this stuff, interestingly enough, happened in the last year of the election.

Well the member for The Battlefords at that time got into the cabinet and worked very hard. They brought him in as a talented individual, and he convinced the cabinet to put into The Battlefords, Gainers. Sot here in the year before the election, he gets into the cabinet; they're building the Gainers plant; it's all constructed during the election campaign. The building's standing there ready to go into production.

Hunter's manufacturing starts up, bought the Vanguard out in Winfield and moved that into The Battlefords. And we appreciate all those jobs and all the energy that's gone into that building as well.

Hi R Doors, a firm from Edmonton, is coming in there; they're doing the site excavation now. That was all announced before, and we appreciate that business.

There was the John Paul II Collegiate, a new separate high school that was built. There was the Battleford Central School where my children go to school, and they appreciate the new school that they're going to.

Mr. Speaker, they built a young offenders facility out on the Saskatchewan hospital grounds. And we appreciate those jobs. And there's a senior citizens high-rise that's going to open this month, the Ruth White Manor — nice senior citizens high-rise close to downtown North Battleford. And there's the enriched housing unit for seniors that's only two blocks from my own residence — and the seniors appreciate that as well.

But you see what happened is that even though that member was such a good member and worked so hard, and worked in consultation with the mayors in that community and the community of Battleford and the city of North Battleford, the people thought that you were so despicable that they would not re-elect him. They were so mad at the Tory government that they wouldn't re-elect a member like that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — That's a sad testimony, Mr. Speaker, for a government that says that they care and are trying to say that they're doing something for the people in the province of Saskatchewan. Very sad, Mr. Speaker.

Well, fiscal responsibility seems to be the order of the day. And that's what's written down in all the papers that are being read over there — fiscal responsibility. Well . . . is it okay to say false? Propaganda, propaganda is a better word, because I don't know who you have as the propaganda minister, actually, but Goebbels would have lost his job back in the 1930's and the 1940's if that person had been in existence today. Because what's actually happening in the province and what's coming out of people's mouths on that side of the House are two totally different things. Partly truth, partly fiction — total contradiction. You should have a song writer working for you as well.

Another note I made came from question period today, Mr. Speaker. As far as I know the Premier of this province has no speech impediment whatsoever. And today when he was answering a question from one of our hon. members, he stuttered on the word truth. Yes, fiscally responsible. That's why the demonstration was out on Saturday, a big part of fiscal responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Was there a demonstration?

Mr. Anguish: — Yes, there was a demonstration. They may not acknowledge it, but there was definitely a demonstration here.

And some of the members over there said, well it's the New Democrats inciting these people and organizing them to come out and demonstrate in front of the legislature. Well I'm very happy that all the New Democrats were in Saskatoon planning how to defeat those people on the other side of the House. We were there, the demonstrators were here, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — I really want to get on to this fiscal responsibility. It happened at the 1982 election, Mr. Speaker — came in basically at the end of the fiscal year and this government came into place. And they projected a deficit budget in their very first year, and they overshot the deficit they projected. They spent \$7 million more than what they projected to spend. And that's close; it's not bad. And deficits aren't always bad if you're investing in something that'll give you a return in the future. Many governments have done that, but they've always brought their houses back into order, Mr. Speaker.

Then in the '83-84 fiscal year they projected a deficit again of \$317 million. Well this time they overshot it by \$14 million . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well still pretty close. And then in the 1984-85 fiscal year they projected a deficit of \$267 million. And then they overshot it. They spent ever more than that; they spent \$112 million more than that. Yes, it's getting worse.

And then the fiscal year '85-86, they projected another deficit of \$291 million.

An Hon. Member: — They got a new Finance minister.

Mr. Anguish: — Did the Finance minister change at that point? That was the difference. The hon. member from Saskatoon Westmount tells me that it was a new Finance minister.

Well in that year that they projected a deficit of \$291 million, they spent \$293 million more than what they projected in the deficit. So the actual deficit in that single year was \$584 million. Fiscal responsibility, my friends, fiscal responsibility. Where is the jeering over there? Come on, it gets me going. Silence.

An Hon. Member: — Silence.

Mr. Anguish: — Silence. Well and then, Mr. Speaker, we come into election year. Election year. I'm excited about this one, I'll tell you. In the fiscal year 1986-87 they projected another deficit of \$389 million. Mr. Speaker, they spent a thousand, two hundred and thirty-five million dollars. They overshot their projection by \$846 million. Fiscal responsibility. Fiscal responsibility? Are you kidding?

And you see, one of the biggest problems, Mr. Speaker, is they never stick to any plan. They never stick to any plan, Mr. Speaker. And it's quite obvious because if you stuck to the plan you would basically be within what was in the first year, only overshooting by 7 million. But when you overshoot by \$846 million, there's either no plan there or else they never stuck to it. And every time the public

opinion polls flinched a little bit, they'd throw another bucket of money here, another bucket of money there, and that is absolutely no fiscal responsibility. That's fiscal irresponsibility.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — You see, the Tories have . . . I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, the government, I believe, has two agendas. They have a political agenda, and that political agenda is to express to people how bad things are, but not take any credit for getting us in that situation. And this government has to take total credit for getting us into the economic mess we're in today in the province of Saskatchewan. No question about that.

And so that in the last year before the next election, whenever they're brave enough to call it, unless some of the back-benchers join the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg who, I see, has returned, and I'm happy that you're here this evening. If you will walk over there, that's the only way we'll get the election sooner, so do it now. Don't wait for, let's see, '86 — 1991, it could be - 1991 if you go by past precedent, but you never stick to any precedents anyway, so we'll only be guessing. 1991 comes along for '91-92 fiscal year. It looks like we'll likely be projecting — oh, on these projections, be a trillion-dollar budget and you'd overshoot it by two.

(2115)

So we're going to be in a big economic mess unless something happens in the province of Saskatchewan, because they will push the deficit up there to gain re-election in the province of Saskatchewan and hope that people forget what's happened today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — But they've affected too many people, Mr. Speaker, because people in Saskatchewan aren't going to forget this. They aren't going to forget the attack on the medicare system. They aren't going to forget the attacks on themselves as individuals in the province of Saskatchewan. They'll be thrown out when they try and buy people's votes next time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — So to me, that's the political agenda, Mr. Speaker, of the government. The legislative agenda is to privatize and destroy whatever has been built up and is viewed as public sector in the province of Saskatchewan. They're going to privatize everything they can as a contingency plan so they'll all have jobs when they're done here.

You go back to the last Conservative government in Saskatchewan before the Devine administration came along was 1929. They went to the maximum on their mandate, went to 1934, didn't elect one single member back to the provincial legislature. So they're very wary, Mr. Speaker. They want lots privatized so they can have jobs when they're done their term of destroying the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think I've taken enough time of the House. I'd like to close off with a quote, unless the members on the other side of the House harass me, and I might be moved to keep speaking . . . to keep speaking this evening. But I found this quote, and it comes from a Professor Alexander Tyler, and I'm sure that the members on the opposite side wouldn't recognize that name at all. And in all fairness, likely the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg wouldn't recognize it either. And in all fairness, possibly some of us wouldn't recognize the quote because it came from Professor Alexander Tyler just before the Declaration of Independence was signed in the United States., I believe around 1776, or in those years somewhere. And he referred, and I quote that:

A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury.

And the voters in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, certainly have discovered that with the Conservatives. People voted for them in many areas because they promised them rich rewards at election time.

But now people realize that you can't do that because we're a caring, sharing society. Although Professor Tyler may not be absolutely correct in what he's saying, the bottom line is certainly true as it applies to Tories in the province of Saskatchewan.

Professor Tyler goes on to say that:

From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy, always followed by a dictatorship.

Well let's examine that a little bit, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly they promised lots. As I've said before, the people in Saskatchewan won't forget, because there isn't a single family in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that hasn't been touched negatively by this government over the past six months — not a single family in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well, what about the part he says in the quote about: democracy collapses over loose fiscal policy? Today there is no democracy in the province of Saskatchewan.

The only democracy we had in Saskatchewan was at the last election, although by a quirk of constituencies the Conservatives formed more seats, but New Democrats got more votes in the province of Saskatchewan. So we accept that. Democracy's at work. But here's no democracy now. You listen to no one.

The glow on the face from the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster . . . What an asset to that caucus over there, I'll tell you. He's one of the ones the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg should work on to come on over. It'd be a great asset to your caucus as well. You could

make him deputy leader.

Mr. Speaker, the quote goes on, and I'd like to wrap it up because it really speaks of this Conservative government and what they've done to people in the province of Saskatchewan. I quote:

From bondage to spiritual faith;
from spiritual faith to great courage;
from courage to liberty;
from liberty to abundance;
from abundance to selfishness;
from selfishness to complacency;
from complacency to apathy;
from apathy to dependence;
(and) from dependency back again (to) bondage.

As I said, I don't necessarily agree with everything that's explained in there in the way that Professor Tyler would explain it, but I certainly know that the Conservatives in government have put people in Saskatchewan into bondage.

People in Saskatchewan are having a hard time making ends meet, Mr. Speaker. I get phone calls from residents of nursing homes from level 2, 3, and 4 care, that in one swoop have had their rents increased by \$73 a month. I get people phoning me in tears — tears out of a serious concern that they won't be able to afford to get the drugs and the medications they need because they have to pay for them up front and don't have the money.

And is this government listening? No, they don't seem to be listening very well. But we'll find out what happens, because the next demonstration that happens at the legislature won't be 5 or 7,000 people. The next demonstration at the legislature will be tens of thousands of people unless we can force you to change your minds. The only thing that you appreciate on that side of the House is raw power. The member from Wilkie runs in a safe seat so he can even afford to laugh more than the member from Cutknife-Lloyd. And you yuck it up now, buddy, because you won't be here after the next election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — I saw the member from Kelsey-Tisdale holding up an article to me, Mr. Speaker, an article from the *Battleford Telegraph*. And it's got a great headline on there, "Anguish Warns Chamber." Well that's a very interesting article. I wish you'd circulate it to all your members. I was quite concerned about it. Chamber of commerce asked me to come to a confidential meeting with their board of directors. So I go to the confidential meeting with the board of directors, Mr. Speaker, and what do you know, a month later the confidential meeting appears on the front page of the *Battleford Telegraph*.

Now you have to appreciate the *Battleford Telegraph*, Mr. Speaker, because the only time, with the possible exception of maybe election time, that I'd get front page in the *Battleford Telegraph* is if they could extremely embarrass me. And so they thought it was a great embarrassment to have a headline that "Anguish Warns (the) Chamber." But anyway, a month after our meeting it

appears in the paper, this confidential meeting that we had with the board of directors of the chamber of commerce.

So I phoned the president of the chamber of commerce and I said, Doug, have you seen the *Telegraph*? Doug's the president of the chamber of commerce, Mr. Speaker; I wasn't talking to myself. So I ask him, I said, have you seen the *Telegraph*? And he said yes. He said, I'm extremely embarrassed about it — extremely embarrassed about it. I said, I'm not very happy about it either. I said, I see that as a bit of a betrayal of confidence in the meeting we had.

I got off to a very bad start with the chamber of commerce, Mr. Speaker, because all those people over there were running around saying that I was anti-business and I was against all the developments coming into the Battlefords. Well I'm not insane. I don't need the mental health budget to protect me. I get along quite well with business. I have to rely on business to earn my income most of the time, Mr. Speaker. But because the Goebbels on that side of the House, whoever that might be, did a very effective job with the mayors in North Battleford and the former member of the legislature . . . So we had a baring of the chest with the chamber of commerce and the whole story got out.

But you've got to appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that they were described in the *Telegraph* as minutes of a meeting. Well to me, minutes of a meeting have always reflected . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. I find the incident the member is relating interesting, and other members do, but I wonder how that relates to the budget. If you could relate it, well, you can carry on.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, it's a well understood rule in parliaments all over Canada that the members who speak on the two main debates — the throne speech and the budget speech — have the widest possible latitude in speaking. And I would be very upset, Mr. Speaker, if in fact the latitude was narrowed in any way whatsoever, and I know that parliamentarians all over would be upset if the latitude on these two main debates are narrowed in any way whatsoever. And that's the point of order. But I don't believe we can narrow the latitude.

Mr. Speaker: — I accept the point of order as raised by the member; however, as I said in my original statement, that you could somehow relate it to the budget, it's acceptable. I think there should be some kind of a relationship somewhere.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, it may be your opinion, and I respect your opinion. What I am talking about here are the rules under which this legislature has functioned for decades. I can remember as a small boy sitting in the gallery watching the debates on these two debates. The members had the widest possible latitude. I can remember sitting on this side and that side of the House, having the widest possible latitude. You can talk about the price of rice in China if you wish. I don't advise it, but you can. And I say that anything that detracts from the practice that we've had for generations of wide latitude on either of these debates would be a disservice to the

parliamentary system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — There is absolutely no intention of limiting debate, I can assure you of that. That was not the intention at all, except I was just wondering, as I sat here, you know, where is the relationship going to come? And I am sure that the member does have a relationship somewhere. So I just want to assure the members that there is absolutely no intention of limiting their scope of debate.

Mr. Anguish: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll certainly carry on. It interrupted my train of thought, but I'm sure that I'll collect myself here in just a moment as to where I'd left off.

The point will be made — and I'll bring it to a conclusion, my little story. But first off . . . I was taunted by a member opposite by holding up the article from the *Telegraph*, and I wasn't going to bring it up at all, but I'm a sensitive kind of guy and I feel it necessary to respond. If the Tories are going to be using this as a new piece of propaganda against me, I wish to get my statement of it on the record in the House. And I'll even make a further tie in, Mr. Speaker, when I finish telling you my story about the "Anguish Warns Chamber" in the *Battleford Telegraph* paper.

And you see, Mr. Speaker, the *Telegraph* portrayed these as minutes of a meeting. Well to me, minutes would signify that there were decisions made; there were motions that were moved and seconded and debated and passed or defeated, but none of that happened. What it was, Mr. Speaker, was that someone at the chamber meeting was making notes. So to begin with, it was their biased interpretation of the meeting that we had. And then those notes were copied out and circulated to some of the directors that weren't there at this confidential airing meeting that we had with the chamber of commerce.

And to the credit of the president of the chamber of commerce he said to me: I know every one who has a copy of those notes from that meeting. And he said: I'm going to find out who it was. And I thought, that's really good, and I have some respect for you for doing that. Well, he phones and he confronts every director, every director of the chamber of commerce, and he finally found out who it was who released these notes to the *Telegraph*.

And the thing about releasing the notes to Cheryl Cook, who is a reporter at the *Telegraph*, is that she has no qualms about admitting her strengths in the Tory party. Then again, she interprets an already biased set of notes from a meeting, and I'm not consulted about it; so then again it's another interpretation that appears in the paper.

And do you know who it was who released the notes to Cheryl Cook at the *Telegraph*? Do you want to know who it was? It was Howard Heffernan from Gulf Oil. Yes! Well, it's still Gulf Oil . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Howard Heffernan? Well, he's the former president of the chamber of commerce. He's a very right-wing type of

individual. He says he has nothing personal against me, but he has professional differences with me.

And I said to the president of the chamber of commerce when he let me know who it was who released those notes, I said, do you think that maybe Howard Heffernan is more interested in politics than he is in your chamber of commerce? This Conservative that would take those notes over there to try and discredit the member of the legislature, instead of trying to promote some harmony in which we can work together?

(2130)

So that's sort of the tie-in. It sort of tells something about what strong Tories are really like, those that stick together in the most difficult of times.

Mr. Speaker, I may close off fairly soon here, but I'd like to say that what people in Saskatchewan are learning right now is learning from experience. And the problem with learning from experience is quite often you learn things you didn't want to know. And I think that speaks for the things that Tories in this province have been doing. People are shocked that they finally know what's going on in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And if you could have kept the legislature out, the government — I shouldn't say you, Mr. Speaker — but if the government could have kept the legislature out, I don't think they would have ever called it back in because, again, all they appreciate is raw power. And they figure if they get elected at election time, to heck with everything else, we'll just ram through whatever we want. And if it wasn't in the Constitution of Canada that you have to call the legislature in once per year, I'm sure we wouldn't be sitting here, Mr. Speaker. We'd be out, and you'd see even larger demonstrations in front of the Legislature building. You'd see people demonstrating all over this province, Mr. Speaker, to get out their word in what they feel about this government.

So I ask the government: show some compassion; listen to what some of the other members have to say, even though it gets maybe a bit rhetorical at times and you kibitz back and forth — we to you, you to us — but try and take some thing from what other people say to you. And if you can't, well the back-benchers have the option of joining the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, or you'd have the test case of the member from Saskatoon Eastview resigning and call a by-election — maybe that might make them listen, Mr. Speaker.

But I think that you should do the people of Saskatchewan a favour and lighten up a little bit. Lighten up on the people in the province because the people of the province of Saskatchewan do not deserve what they're going through at the present time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — I received a note here from the member for North Battleford — obviously from someone across the way. They say, I guess in conclusion, that I've done something that's unforgivable; that's likely meaning that I've spoken out for the people of the province of Saskatchewan. I'll leave it at that for tonight, Mr. Speaker,

but this government is going to hear lots more from this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and you'd better be prepared to stay here till the snow flies unless you change some of your policies.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased or rise in the legislature tonight to respond to the budget address introduced by my colleague, the Minister of Finance. And first of all I would like to commend the minister highly for having the wisdom and the foresight and intestinal fortitude to bring in a budget that will help turn the tide in the rising deficit. But being that the past member that spoke brought it up, I would deviate for a moment, Mr. Speaker.

He too, as others over there, have been calling for an election. And I would read for a moment the article to which he referred, and ask myself why? Perhaps he wants to try the federal forum again. I'm really sorry first of all, on behalf of all of my friends in the chambers of commerce throughout the province as well as, certainly, the North Battleford and Battlefords chamber, that he can't trust his chamber and the business community there. It's quite a headline: "Anguish Warns Chamber." Quite a headline! Who are you to warn anybody? We're here to discuss, and we're here to debate, and we're here to serve the people. We don't warn the people.

But in any event, it goes on to say that:

Anguish was welcomed to the luncheon gathering, and a suggestion was made politics be kept to a minimum, with discussion centring on business and community issues.

Mr. Speaker: — What's the point of order?

Mr. Anguish: — How does this tie in . . . what latitude does this member have to quote from an article in the *Telegraph* that has nothing to do with the budget? How is he going to tie this in?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — How is he going to tie this in at the end of his comments, Mr. Speaker? He's got no right to do that in the budget debate, and I suggest you call him to order.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please, order. The point of order is interesting, but not well taken. I listened very carefully, and I knew that the member who just raised the point of order was going to tie in his remarks somewhere, and I'm confident that the member speaking now will do the same thing.

The original ruling was that we give wide latitude to speakers, so that's what we're doing as long as they can tie it into the topic.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, a good ruling. I won't dwell as long as he did on it in any event, but I just think that I should read into the record that:

Anguish promised to be as non-partisan as possible, according to the minutes, and then made a speech listing all of the philosophical and political views of the New Democratic Party.

It states that he attacked the Gainers operation, but yet the executive vice-president reminded Anguish, according to the minutes that he referred to, that some of the problems he had mentioned were instigated by the NDP. He also added that provincial grants used by Gainers, Vanguard and Hi R Door were available to any new industry in the province, and he was pleased to see the Battlefords receive 25 per cent of the total amount available across Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Not you, Bergen.

Bergen also told Anguish that:

The approach in the past had not generated any sustained business activity in the Battlefords, and that spin-off from the recent developments are already apparent and will make the financial support for industry a sound investment for the community.

It's unfortunate you disagree with your community . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, I'm getting there.

The minutes from the meeting also show one of the chamber directors told Anguish:

It was difficult to deal with an MLA who had publicly declared he is anti-business and won an election based on the criteria that business owes everyone a living, regardless of performance or production.

And the headline, Mr. Speaker, Battlefords MLA, Doug Anguish, warned the local Chamber of Commerce Officials . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, Order, please. Order! I think that the member for the Battlefords should tone it down a bit.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — If there is any other leader, not only in this province, not only in this good country of ours, not only in North America, better than Premier Grant Devine, I have yet to meet him.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — It doesn't take much to humour you. Listen to this:

Battlefords MLA, Doug Anguish, warned local Chamber of Commerce officials recently, he might be a cabinet minister after the next provincial election, and it would be in their best interest to maintain a good working relationship with him.

An Hon. Member: — A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — What is the point of order?

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'll be very brief. I think it was a misquote. I think that I threatened them if I was leader of the party and premier of this province, so it might be an error in the article.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please! It's a point of order not well taken and the member continues.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I read it very clearly. Interestingly enough, and he referred to the minutes . . . There are just a couple of paragraphs on another article. Not minutes, but rather a reporter's assessment of the situation in Battleford that appeared in an editorial.

And I quote:

It seems clear that the business community of the Battlefords is in a difficult position, and so if our local member of the Legislative Assembly, MLA Doug Anguish doctrines don't seem to fit the business community's, and the business community knows it.

It goes on further to say that:

(The directors believe it will probably be) difficult to deal with an MLA who has publicly declared he is anti-business, and won an election based on the criteria that business owes everyone a living, regardless of performance and production.

President Doug Ulmer is recorded in the minutes as having stressed that the collective group should be working toward common community betterment targets, avoiding the political differences as much as possible. Business will have its work cut out for it in trying to work alongside someone who has taken the stands that he has, but, for the benefit of all involved, will have to make the best of it. Business feels like the hand that fed and got bitten.

Not very good press.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — It leads me into a little scenario that I'd like to talk about diversifications for a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, because it was a central theme of our first theme of office. It's an even more important theme in our second term.

It's absolutely critical that we take advantage of what we have in Saskatchewan and build on our strengths. Food processing, for instance. It should be no surprise in an agricultural province like ours that food processing is our largest manufacturing industry. Food processing, in fact, makes up over 40 per cent of Saskatchewan's exports. We must build further on that strength and encourage more developments like the Gainers plant in North Battleford and the Intercon plant expansion in Saskatoon. My home town of Regina has got a co-op upgrader; Prince Albert is now getting the Weyerhaeuser paper mill — these projects, built on our strengths in oil and forest products.

We spend a lot of money on health care in Saskatchewan. Why not make health products here? Well, the company Canapharm is doing just that with its intravenous supply factory in the town of Wolseley.

We also use a lot of farm chemicals on our crops. So why should these chemicals not be manufactured in our province? Premier Devine has indicated the government will do everything it can to ensure that a farm chemical industry is established in this province. That industry will further reduce farmers' input costs and further diversify our economy.

There's nothing magical about diversifications. It's not hard to do. I think the reason we're seeing more of it these days, and we'll see more of it in the future, Mr. Speaker, is because of the new attitude which exists towards business in Saskatchewan, exclusive of that bench, and towards the role of government in the economy.

Our government is solidly behind business people because we believe it's the private sector which creates the wealth in our society. More and more people are agreeing with us. We've seen a dramatic increase in the number of people who want to start their own businesses, several times that of only a few years ago.

We've worked with business, not against it, because it's only by working together that Saskatchewan will grow. And working together, of course, applies not just to our business community but right across the board.

Certainly our Minister of Finance had some very tough decisions. Decisions to trim expenditures are not easy; they're not pleasant, but without these decisions our deficit could have increased much, much more.

Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Finance had not acted now, the interest payments on our debt could total nearly \$1 billion by 1991, exceeding our current total expenditures on education and highways. And that's why I congratulate him for having the intestinal fortitude, the guts, to make these tough decisions now for the future well-being of our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Listening to the members opposite, one can't help but get the impression that they would like to go on and did the NDP in Manitoba and add to the horrendous debt that they now have. They seem to be living in the past. They seem to be preaching the same old rhetoric. And I'm pleased to be a part of Premier Grant Devine's team, led by him, building our province with a vision for the future.

The opposition members preach fear, and they still live in the past. They have no focus on anything real that's going on. They have a completely irresponsible attitude. They may think, I suppose, that it's politically smart to have that kind of a strategy, but it's the same irresponsible tactics that resulted in their defeat by the people of Saskatchewan, not once, but twice in the last five years.

You can't scare people for support. Scare tactics don't work. You must do it the old-fashioned way, the way our

Premier did. You must earn it. You must earn it by confidence and earn it by respect. And if you laugh at that, my friends, you are laughing at the voters of this province, and it's something that my colleagues and I do not do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, this is a budget to protect the future of our people, something the members opposite don't seem to understand or don't want to understand. And they're all apparently interested in is some dubious, short-term political gain that they seem to believe their tactics will bring them.

There's no question that this budget will put our province on the right path and allow us to continue to protect our people, to enhance our quality of life which we are all so proud of, to enable us to take full advantage of economic opportunities that lie ahead of us.

The members opposite all seem to have their heads in the past. They either don't know or don't care to know about what is going on in the market-place of the world today. They don't understand business; they never did; they never will. Perhaps that's one reason they don't understand what a staggering effect the changes of the world economy is having on our Saskatchewan economy today.

(2145)

I note that they never seem too concerned about our agricultural sector. But are they not aware that the prices for wheat are the lowest in 40 years, that oil prices fell from \$42 a barrel in 1985 to a low of \$14 in 1986, that potash prices dropped from \$155 a tonne in '82 to under \$80 a tonne in 1986, that uranium prices fell from \$50 a pound in 1978 to \$24 a pound in 1986.

This sharp decline in world prices for our resource and agriculture products has resulted in heavy shortfalls in provincial government revenues and has added tremendous pressures to our budget decisions — commodity prices well beyond the control of our provincial government. Reaction to this world economy must be quick, must be planned, and above all, it must be fair.

Mr. Speaker, we respond to those problems just in that fashion, with good, sound management of our provincial economy. That's why, in this budget, our government has taken steps to reduce the deficit and thereby protect our future as a province. In taking steps to reduce expenditures, we first conducted a review of the costs of government-directed and -operated programs and services. These expenditures account for only one-third of the provincial budget. The remaining two-thirds of the budget provides funding for third party individuals and groups.

We did this because, before asking other organizations to review their level of expenditures, it was felt that we, as a government, should first take a good, hard look at itself. We must lead by example. We cannot expect our citizens to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. This we

have done, by consolidating and streamlining government departments and agencies and reducing the size of the civil service by 2,000 people — and doing this difficult task humanely and yet with compassion. This streamlining is not being disruptive, particularly to essential services, but rather it will rejuvenate and invigorate public service. I notice the member from the North giggling. I guess there's some humour to that — I fail to see the humour.

This is a tremendous undertaking, Mr. Speaker — putting our financial house in order. And with the government providing the leadership, all residents of the province are being asked to do their part in sharing the burden of this deficit reduction program. All sectors, all age groups, all geographic regions in our province are being asked to contribute.

As Minister of Urban Affairs, I want to report to this House that for municipalities, as with all sectors of our society, we made our budget decisions with great care. We were guided by the principles of fairness and of equity. We tried to be fair and sensitive to the needs of all groups and individuals affected, as has been our policy in the past. We placed a great deal of emphasis on consultation — consultation with the people affected by the decisions and policies that we put in place.

Mr. Speaker, in spite of dramatically decreasing provincial revenues, I was pleased that the final result of funding reduction, of the revenue-sharing programs of the municipalities, was kept at 1 per cent reduction of last year's level to ease the impact of the taxpayers. Further, I see that many municipalities have taken up the challenge and have been able to absorb this reduction and keep their mill rates the same as last year.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report that communities like Estevan and Prince Albert have kept their mill rates at last year's level, while others were able to hold theirs at modest increases of 2 per cent or less.

I quote with interest from the Regina *Leader-Post*, an article from Swift Current, Mr. Speaker, that shows the city with an accumulated surplus of \$2.6 million in the general revenue fund, and a net worth of about \$57.9 million.

And finance director Cliff Mathies said:

The city has the lowest municipal property tax in the province, but has still been able to generate operating surpluses for the last 20 years.

And he said that:

The city is developing its policies to eventually become financially independent of funding from senior levels of government.

Moose Jaw Times-Herald. "Taxes in Moose Jaw are lower than in Regina or Saskatoon," the article says.

Based on taxes for a standard 1,200 sq. ft. bungalow with a single attached garage on a 50 x 110 foot lot, \$200 cheaper than total taxes in

Regina, and about \$36 lower than those in Saskatoon.

Metka, the financial director, says that that makes Moose Jaw look pretty good.

Once the revenue sharing level was set, we asked SUMA, how do we go about distributing these funds to communities? The distribution formula is sensitive to population changes. SUMA had asked that the distribution formula and new federal census figures be used. The results of 1986 federal census saw about half of all communities decline in population since the 1981 census.

So after consultation with the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, we decided to modify the distribution formula in two ways. First, the basic component was increased to provide greater baseline funding that would not be affected by population changes.

And secondly, a safety net was put in place to ensure that no community would face a reduction in its grant of more than 6 per cent. And that safety net will protect those 250 communities from funding reductions that would otherwise have been too sudden and too deep for them to manage. These revenue-sharing decisions were reached only after intensive consultations with SUMA.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that given the funds available, and considering the worst case scenario which could have seen a greater decrease in funds, we have made the best allocations possible. For this year we were forced to make a decision not to proceed with the provincial capital fund. However, I am pleased to include \$4.7 million in this year's budget to clean up outstanding commitments.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that when the NDP were the government, they too had a year when there was no capital program in effect. I believe that was in 1979 or '80. I also point out that it was during a time when provincial revenues were extremely buoyant.

However, times are tougher now, and being a fiscally responsible government we could not continue to totally fund this program this year. I realize that the loss of the program will force many municipalities to take a hard look at their capital spending and financial plans. It will require some hard prioritization at the municipal level, not unlike what we had to do at the provincial level.

But as I travel through the regional meetings now and attend the SUMA regional conferences . . . And by the way, SUMA, you know, is a totally non-partisan group — they invite all of the members of the legislature, whether it be government or opposition, to attend. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, only one or two of the opposition members have taken it upon themselves to attend that convention.

We heard earlier tonight, members opposite talk about political cowardice. Yet my critic in the opposition benches, the member from Regina Victoria — and unfortunately he has left the House — publicly criticizes me for tinkering with the formula. And yet, as I explained, this was done through consultations with SUMA. Why

does he not accuse them also? Unfortunately he shows no respect for a fine 82-year-old institution who respects all political parties. There is no hue; there is no holler or cry from the SUMA membership at large as I travel the province. Lots of the SUMA membership shares the same vision for our province that the Premier does — to build a greater Saskatchewan. And they see their responsibility and they go ahead and they do it.

Meanwhile funding levels for northern municipalities will be the same for grants under the northern revenue sharing program. That means that every community will continue to receive the same operating grant as it received in the last year.

In addition, the northern capital grants program will also continue this year. As some of you may know, in our northern communities revenue-sharing grants account for a substantial portion of a community's total revenues. We realize that a reduction such as was announced for the other municipalities would have had a more profound effect on the northern communities. Even a one per cent reduction would have had a significant impact on mill rates, particularly in the smaller communities.

Mr. Speaker, our government is also committed to building our northern communities and protecting their future as well, to ensure that they, too, are kept in a position to take advantage of economic opportunities that become available. It is for this reason that we decided to continue the funding programs for our northern communities.

We do, however, acknowledge that it may be time to update their distribution formula, and we will soon be approaching all northern communities to seek advice on the development of a new funding formula.

In the early part of June I had occasion to travel to some of our northern communities, and to consult with the mayors and counsellors of these municipalities to seek their advice on these and other issues. As I said before, I place a great deal of emphasis on the consultative process. It is a process I plan to continue in all my dealings with municipal officials.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to provide operating assistance to the public transit systems located primarily in Saskatchewan's major cities. Funding for transit of the disabled services remains a fundamental priority to our government. Currently there are more than 60 communities receiving operating and capital funding from the provincial government for this very important function . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And it wasn't cut, if the member would look.

This funding, too, will continue to maintain existing services and expand into new ones.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude my remarks with a few comments on housing.

Under our administration, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has been a leader in Canada for innovative housing programs. In fact, we are number one in the nation for the delivery of quality housing for our senior

citizens, low income families, and the disabled. We accomplished this through our own provincial initiatives, by working together in partnership with the federal government and, without question, by working with the private sector.

We are especially proud of our housing programs to meet the needs of the continually increasing numbers of senior citizens in our province. Through consultation with senior citizens, the enriched housing concept was developed. The enriched housing concept has been developed to maximize independent living through self-contained units. I've had the pleasure of participating in a number of official openings and sod turnings recently for these enriched housing projects, and I can tell you that our senior citizens are most happy with them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Success of these programs is due to the combined efforts of home care boards, district co-ordinating committees, housing authorities and others. And I want to commend all of them for their dedication. We are now providing excellent accommodation to the people who deserve it most — to our senior citizens.

While we as government must target our resources to assist the very needy, there is also a need to look at new ways of delivering traditional housing programs. The people of Saskatchewan have always responded to the need for creativity, and we will do so again.

Few programs ever introduced in our province have had the appeal of the Saskatchewan home program. Recognizing the importance of the family home, this program was developed to assist Saskatchewan people in the maintenance and preservation of one of their most important assets. At the same time it generated millions of dollars in economic activity and created thousands of jobs for our citizens.

Nearly 12,000 jobs created since the start of the program to go with the individual home improvements which are now commonplace in our villages, in our towns and cities. I'm sick and tired of other rhetoric emitting from the opposition benches concerning the cost, the down side, the legality, and I will stand up as a PC member proudly and speak out on this highly productive and well-received program.

First off, delivery of the home program is well within the mandate of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, and we have many legal opinions to support that position. Without question, the home program is a major job creation program. I ask you: are you against jobs? The retail trade sector has been significantly strengthened by the home program. More than double the normal amount of activity is being enjoyed by the home improvement sector. Are you all opposed to small business, or just perhaps the one member? It has plunked over a half a billion dollars of public and private money into the provincial economy. Saskatchewan's unemployment rate, continually one of the lowest in Canada, and I'm proud to say that the home program contributes significantly to those figures.

The Saskatchewan home program was designed to protect and improve the most important investment that the people of this province will make — their home. You speak of pools and Jacuzzis. Swimming pools are labour intensive, it creates jobs to put in a pool, and yes, a very small number of people have used the grant for that purpose, and the member from Nutana speaks out against that. Well let me tell you, will you deny those that choose that form of improvement to their home, that very basic right to do just that — \$1500 grant that sparks a \$20,000 job? Well I'm proud to tell you that my constituents of Regina South are very pleased indeed with that aspect of the home program.

The home program has been a tremendous success, Mr. Speaker. It's another program designed by our government to improve the quality of life for our people. And I repeat, you need only look around your neighbourhood, whether it be a city or a town or a village, to see the economic effect of that program, one of the most successful job creation programs in the history of this province that's created thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of economic activity throughout Saskatchewan; another form of diversification to keep our small business sector alive and well, and adds another measure of protection to the thousands in our small business community.

Mr. Speaker, quality of life is extremely important to me and to my constituents of Regina South. So long as my Premier continues to build this province to the potential that it can achieve, so long as this government continues its plan for protecting our people now and in the future, I stand solidly behind the sound management that the budget indicates and the promise that it holds to protect and to build that future to supply all of us with the quality of life that we want and desire.

Mr. Speaker, I will not support the amendment, but I most certainly will support the main motion. And I beg leave, at this time, to adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:04 p.m.