

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. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I concluded my remarks earlier this afternoon, I was talking about the dental care program and the way in which the cut-backs to that program have impacted on Saskatchewan people, especially some of the constituents that I've talked to in Saskatoon Sutherland.

I think when it comes to the dental care program, we see the clear agenda of the Devine PCs, to abandon the whole of the health care system to the private sector. In the first term of office, it was four-year-olds that were dropped from the dental care program. And now with a renewed mandate, we see yet another group of people, young people, dropped from the program — those 13 years of age and older. And the rest of the dental plan program will likely be going in the next weeks and months and years of this government as well.

As they can't manage the economy, they'll be forced to make more cuts to the program to fulfil the real agenda that they have when it comes to health care — continued cuts in royalty rates to the oil companies, so that funding for human priorities such as the dental care program get abandoned to the private sector. The transfer of health care back to private individuals and families — this is what we're seeing in this budget. The real Conservative agenda, the privatization of health care, shifting the burden from the public arena to individual people.

Well, Mr. Speaker, some of us in this Assembly and some of the public of Saskatchewan no doubt have heard of the award-winning Canadian author, W.P. Kinsella, the author of *The Iowa Baseball Conspiracy*. In that book, Kinsella tells the story of the backwards plague that settled into rural Iowa some 100 years ago in that part of the country.

The backwards plague was a very strange and eerie sickness that settled on rural Iowa. It's strange and eerie in that it struck only young people and children. It saw them grow young again. In other words, there was a regression. They literally shrank in size physically; their mental capacities went backwards. And in 15 or 20 years then, we had people who were young adults reverting back into infancy. And in fact Kinsella said there were documented records of this happening in Iowa, in Onomanna, and Sioux Falls and other cities like that. Parents who raise children only to have to turn around and raise them a second time.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what we have here in

Saskatchewan, a backwards plague. People who worked for medicare to establish a caring and compassionate vision of society are now seeing that vision of society rolled backwards by this Conservative government, and they too will have to fight again to re-establish medicare.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — It's a backwards plague and it's perpetrated by this government and the Premier of this province. A government hell-bent and determined to roll back the clock on medicare. Not just to stop it, but to roll it back — to roll back our Saskatchewan traditions of caring and compassion, to take us back to the days when the accumulation of capital was the determining factor in whether individuals got medical care. The person who didn't have capital went sick or didn't go to the hospital in those days, and we're rapidly reverting to those days here in Saskatchewan. And with that sort of vision of health care, Mr. Speaker, that abandonment of our collective social responsibility to each other to be our brother or our sister's keeper, what we have is a backwards plague.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn now from health care and focus a bit on another arena of government expenditure where we can see very, very clearly in the budget documentation itself how the backwards plague has settled into the Department of Science and Technology. Five million, four hundred and ninety-five hundred dollars is what the Finance minister's estimate for 1987 expenditures is for the Department of Science and technology. That's the figure for the year 1988. What was the figure for 1987? The figure for this coming year is half of that. Two million, seven hundred and eight-three hundred dollars — a 50 per cent cut-back in expenditures to the Department of Science and technology. Now also for some people they might say this is fair enough. After all, other government departments are having to cut back as well. Health and education and social services are being cut back, and what can we expect from science and technology with those kinds of cut-backs.

But in fact this isn't what our Premier had said. This isn't what our Premier committed himself to doing during the election campaign eight months ago. Categorically not.

No, the Premier himself stood in Saskatoon on Friday, October 10, during the election, and pledged \$10 million a year for the next five years for science and technology. Seed money for high-tech firms in Saskatchewan; the opportunity for Saskatchewan businesses to become part of another Ottawa Valley high-tech centre here in Saskatchewan. He promised \$50 million over five years to Saskatchewan firms, many of them in Saskatoon. And now his government has walked away from that commitment just as it's walked away from the commitment to the Sherbrooke nursing home in Saskatoon. Just as it's walked away from its commitments not to increase the personal income taxes or the sales tax.

This government has buried this commitment under a verbal barrage of hype found in the Premier's trip to Japan trying to promote things like Joytec and other products.

Yes, \$50 million promised for Saskatchewan high tech in

October — \$10 million each for the next five years, but 2.5 million in this year's budget for science and technology. Clearly duplicity. Clearly a deception of the Saskatchewan people.

What we have, Mr. Speaker, is a Premier who goes back on his word, who plays with numbers, who plays with the public purse, and does this for his own personal, political advantage. And that is precisely why we face the kind of scandalous deficit that we do today, and the slash-backs that we do, because the boy from Estevan simply can't manage the store; he can't be trusted with the public welfare. Now again I'll say that some might argue he can be trusted, that he has honourable intentions, and that the Premier meant what he said when he pledged money to science and technology during the election campaign. Perhaps. Perhaps that was the case.

But then we have to go back to what his government said in this Assembly as recently as December 3, two months later, when it presented the Speech from the Throne. And then there was talk about high tech, talk about Saskatchewan's high-tech future with a new bio-tech institute for research in the province, a new grains research institute, a new potash institute, a new research institute for uranium.

But lo and behold, in this Conservative budget we find no mention whatsoever of any of these promised research initiatives; no allocation of funding for that, that we can determine. All very easy talk about in a Speech from the Throne, but much more difficult for the government that practised deception to deliver on.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I look at these plans, or perhaps I should say these lack of plans, and I say that the people of Saskatchewan are not going to accept this kind of duplicity — especially those people in Saskatoon who are concerned with research and development that goes on there, in the university and in the high-tech sector. They're disappointed that there are no plans, that there's a cut-back in the amount of money for this department, that there's a cut-back for research. And people are beginning to feel duped by their own government.

Words, words, words — further words from the Minister of Finance in his budget address.

This Government recognizes that excellence in education is crucial to the future prosperity of the people of Saskatchewan. A well-educated populace is more adaptable and better equipped to deal with the rapid technological changes that shape our social and economic environment. Mr. Speaker, it is for these reasons that education is a priority of this government.

Well the people of Saskatoon Sutherland recognize these as words and verbiage I can say for sure, because the people of Saskatoon Sutherland aren't getting a new public school in Erindale from this budget and from this same Minister of Finance, a school that they were promised for Erindale. Keep on building Saskatchewan, we were told.

But there's no commitment in this budget to build a new

public school in Erindale. A verbal commitment to excellence in education, but no allocation of funds for such a school — no fiscal commitment from this government. And the people of Sutherland see that they're deceived, yes, again, by this government, just as they were deceived by the announcement of the building of a new addition to Sherbrooke nursing home.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on to comment on the misplaced priorities of this government, the way in which they have deceived people with their tax increases and the like; how they've said one thing and done the opposite. But I won't.

Times are not the best here in Saskatchewan and in the prairies. We all know that. Farmers are troubled by low commodity prices. Working people are troubled by lack of employment and financial pressures. But the land here in Saskatchewan is good, and the people of Saskatchewan are good.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — One thing, one thing is not so good, and that is the government of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — The PC government of this province has mismanaged the people's affairs. It has misplaced priorities. It has betrayed the trust of Saskatchewan people. And the Premier himself has been part of this betrayal and the backwards plague. Clearly what Saskatchewan people need is a government as good as its people.

And it's for this reason that I will rise to support the amendment, and to vote against the main motion, namely this budget.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is my honour and my privilege through you to speak to the people of Saskatchewan and to the people of Canora through this budget debate. It is with confidence that I offer my support and indeed my congratulation so the Minister of Finance who has done a tremendous job under very difficult circumstances.

The people of Canora are very aware of the need for restraint in government, and they expect me to support that restraint as they do. They are aware of and supportive of the reduction in the size of government and the public sector. Canora people know that these things are necessary in the Saskatchewan of today with the difficult times we all face.

(1915)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, much ado has been made over a display in front of the legislature on Saturday. I had the privilege of being home in my constituency over the weekend, and I want to assure the members of the

opposition that not everyone in Saskatchewan is in favour of that type of demonstration.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was very surprised to walk down the street of Canora and find solid support for the government. Mr. Deputy Speaker, they told me three things. Number one, they told us that we're doing the right thing. Secondly, they told me to challenge the opposition to make more discussion and more debate on agricultural issues in this budget debate. And they also told me that, yes, they noticed the display by the opposition during the budget speech.

It is the government's mandate and obligation to bring this province's fiscal situation into line with current realities while maintaining programs which protect people and seeking every opportunity to diversify our economy.

Before I go into detailed remarks about why we face the situation we do and why this budget indeed is a historic one, I would like you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to know something of the commitment this government has made to my people in Canora. In the village of Lintlaw, for example, our government is providing almost \$400,000 for a six-unit seniors apartment complex. Now before our government came to power, seniors in that area either had to go to one of the major cities and be separated from their families or they had to make do with inappropriate housing. A PC government willingly made the resources available to end that state of affairs and it is an example of genuine caring for our seniors as opposed to the rhetoric we so often hear in some quarters.

Many areas of my riding, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have had problems with flooding, but I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is important to the people of the Canora constituency. This government will provide assistance for seven flood-control projects in Canora in the near future, and the total project cost is in excess of \$1.5 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is real commitment to real problems.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — I also want to point out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this budget provides for the completion resurfacing of Highway No. 5 in our riding at a cost of over \$2.3 million.

We also see the government's plan for diversification including the development of tourism at work in Canora. The government will invest the necessary funds to construct change houses and water treatment facilities in Good Spirit provincial park, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This will enable us to deliver a higher quality of service to our tourists. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when that is combined with the good will and warm hospitality of the people of my riding, I am sure you will see our tourist business increase more than you might expect.

One final project that I'm particularly proud of, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is also costly and clear proof that this government will not allow all health initiatives to be

focused in the big cities, that this government cares about my riding. I am extremely happy to announce to the people of Theodore and surrounding district that a new integrated health facility will be constructed in their community this year. This facility will cost the province \$2.6 million. That is the kind of commitment we are talking about in this debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this debate is indeed an important one. It is important because it sets the foundation upon which our province will build a future that is strong and fair and prosperous.

There was a time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when Saskatchewan people were led to believe that we would always have prosperity, that by using borrowed money from bankers in New York we could buy up existing potash mines and uranium mines, and even the land out from under farm families in desperate circumstances — that we could borrow money to do these things and the revenues would continue for ever.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was just not true. I remember, in fact, the Leader of the NDP saying that by borrowing money to buy these things we would assure indefinite prosperity for the government.

In fact, when he was pressed on what would happen if the price for potash, uranium, oil, and grain all declined at the same time, he thought it was a ridiculous idea. But if it happened, he said — if this highly unlikely thing happened — it would be a disaster.

Well, it has happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is causing serious challenges for the government. Had we had a responsible government in the good times, some of these difficult decisions would not have to be made. But we did not.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — And I have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am glad that the faces on the NDP benches haven't changed much since they mismanaged the province, because they cannot escape their own responsibility by crying, it wasn't us; it was someone else. It was the very group of members who sit across the way right now.

What did their vision of Saskatchewan leave us, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. All members get an opportunity to enter into the debate, and I would ask that all members show the courtesy to the member from Canora to give his feelings on this budget debate.

Mr. Kopelchuk: — What did their vision of Saskatchewan leave us, Mr. Deputy Speaker? If you look on page 41 of the budget address, you will see some of their legacy. The potash corporation they bought us is estimated to be \$781 million in debt. The Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation is looking at \$522 million in debt. And if you look at the total for the family of Crown corporations, the

people of this province are responsible for in excess of \$7 billion in Crown corporation debts — \$7 billion of debt, Mr. Speaker. That's what happens when you buy up what other people have built and borrow from New York to do it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Now I see the NDP, now I see the NDP like to cry out from their seats because they cannot stand the truth. But I would like to see a little more of the truth put into this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

For example, the members over there like to talk about health care. They like to look back to history and to pretend that all caring people have to be socialists. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask where were they when doctors were extra billing families in this province. Where were they, Mr. Speaker, when families had to take money out of their pocket to pay for basic health care? You know where they were. They were sitting on the government benches doing nothing about the problem. It took my leader . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it took my leader and our Premier to put a stop to extra billing in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — The NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker, like to pretend that they care about senior citizens, and that is all fine and good to talk a line. But what did they do when they were in office, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Well, first they cared of the elderly by turning them out into the streets. They did this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when they put a moratorium on the construction of nursing homes. Because as the NDP's new president wrote to the former member from Moosomin, you can't have a nursing home in every community. Well we weren't asking for one in every community, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we were just asking for a commitment for the elderly that any decent human being would make. And that kind of commitment we got, as you well know, was a moratorium on nursing homes.

And for our young people, I want to explain that word, moratorium. It means that the government of the NDP refused point blank to even build one nursing home, not one. They have the cash; they had the money to build the nursing homes, but no. No, they were too busy buying up private companies to build nursing homes.

And what about hospitals, Mr. Speaker? The NDP say they care. Was there any hospital construction going on anywhere? Precious little, and I'll let the Leader of the NDP tell you why. He said on the CFQC open line show in Saskatoon, and I quote:

The Heritage Fund was to take money and to invest it like Saskoil in potash, in uranium mines. It was not the belief that the money would be there in cash to build hospitals or nursing homes.

You bet it wasn't, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is the most bizarre about these people over there, these NDP? Is it that they borrow a great deal of money to take away the uranium mines from private people?

They refused to build a health care system; they say the money is for investing in uranium mines. And once they have them, what do they do? They say they want to close them down. They want to close the very mines that they borrowed to take over. They don't want to sell them back to the private sector and so perhaps get a few dollars that could be used to build hospitals; they just want to outright close them. That is the kind of caring the socialists have demonstrated since that bunch over there have been around. Their solution to problems in the economy was to ignore them.

For example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what did the NDP do about high interest rates? What did they do when people were losing their homes and farms, and farms were going under and small businesses were being bankrupted all by sky-high interest rates? What did the NDP do? Well they did do something. First they took over the farms. They said, sure we'll help you if you want to be a tenant of the government, so they took away the farm land from farm families, and like carpet-baggers in the depression, the only way those families could get their land back was to pay twice and three times and four times what the socialists bought it for. And that was the caring face the NDP showed farm families, Mr. Speaker.

Here is what the Leader of the NDP had to say to farm families and farm businesses and just families who stood to lose their homes, and again I quote, this time from the *Leader-Post* of October 11, 1979:

Blakeney rules out the province supplying low-interest money to all farmers and small businesses because that would get the government into the banking business, which would not be appropriate.

So it was okay to get into land-banking business, but it wasn't okay to provide interest rate protection. That, Mr. Speaker, is how the NDP cared.

The members on the other side are also opposing welfare reform, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Reform that gives social assistance clients an opportunity to work and to develop work experience and work skills. It is interesting that they are opposing this because they also oppose not letting people work.

Here's what the Leader of the Opposition said on October 26, 1982: "People are getting paid not to work. That doesn't make any economic sense, no matter what your political philosophy." We agree, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and welfare clients agree.

But where were the NDP when these people wanted a chance to work, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They were building bureaucracies and buying potash mines. Bureaucracies

represent the extent of NDP caring, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They represent it well.

Through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask those NDP over there to remember their greatest hallmark, the department of northern Saskatchewan. We are building this bureaucracy, they said, because we care about people in the North, and the people in the North said, God save us from such caring.

Millions of dollars down the drain — to do what? According to the Northerners, what DNS (department of northern Saskatchewan) accomplished was to turn them into a colonial people — a people that had become wards of the state. And that is NDP caring, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could bring out what students had to say about that bunch over there. I could bring forward statistics and facts that would remind you how thoroughly those people mismanaged this province, but it is plain just from the few examples I have cited.

What we are about here today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is to recover from that past, to overcome the damage done by the NDP. And I ask you to remember, it was those same NDP we look across at today.

Today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are making history and planning the future, and that means we are rebuilding our health care system with programs directed to today's priorities and a system that is responsive to the changing demands of our changing times.

It means a budget for health care that is greater than ever before in the history of this province and greater than all others, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It means, Mr. Deputy Speaker, bringing medicine to our rural communities instead of forcing our rural communities to go to the cities. And, yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it does mean some difficult decisions, including the decision to ask those who can afford it to make some contributions to their drug costs.

And if this is so awful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if this is such a terrible thing, then I challenge the members on that other side of the House to stand up and condemn their brothers in Manitoba who have a program that is much less comprehensive than ours. I challenge them to condemn the Liberals in Ontario who only cover psychiatric patients and few select groups.

They cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. We have the most comprehensive, richest drug plan in Canada. So if it is so bad, I want them to stand in their place and say to Howard Pawley, Howard, you are worse than the Tories in Saskatchewan. You are worse than a Tory and we disown you.

(1930)

They won't do it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of course an NDP premier is worse than a PC premier. It is the nature of things. And these people across the way do not really have the courage of their convictions. They are simply out to score cheap political points through scaring

people. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, while they work to score political points, this government has proven that it will address the real needs of this province and we'll act responsibly to protect our people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud to be a part of this process, a part of this government, and a part of a party that knows how to act on a caring rather than just talk about caring. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be voting against the amendment and for the main motion. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before beginning my address to the budget, I beg leave to make an introduction of a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you hon. members for that leave. The person I wish to introduce is sitting opposite you, Mr. Speaker, in the Speaker's gallery. The gentleman I'm referring to is 91 years young. He happens also be my grandfather, a fact which I am very proud of. Albert Trew comes . . . is now a resident of Regina, but spent virtually all of his lifetime in the Maple Creek constituency, in the Lemsford and Sceptre areas. So please join me in welcoming my grandfather 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. Trew: — Addressing the budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . Before I get started, it's interesting to note *The Edmonton Journal*, June 18, gives the budget the right amount of attention, as it has most of the article covered in red ink — which seems to me to be an appropriate colour — but additionally it makes the article incredibly difficult to read. And I think *The Edmonton Journal* understands what the budget is really worth.

I also want to make a few remarks that I sincerely hope the Premier hears after his remarks earlier today about people leaving Saskatchewan for health care. He was saying that people are coming to Saskatchewan for cancer care, and I submit through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, that indeed people re leaving Saskatchewan for health care. The numbers don't lie. People are leaving Saskatchewan for cancer treatment, and I have someone that is a good friend of mine, happens also to be a constituent, who happens also to be travelling on a regular basis out of province for cancer treatment that is unavailable here in

Saskatchewan. So I suggest that the Premier get his facts a little bit straighter when he talks about cancer victims.

I'd like to just make a brief mention about the former speaker. It was interesting that there wasn't a great deal said about the budget — very little mention about the budget. There seemed to be an awful lot of anti-New Democrat and anti-socialist rhetoric, but very little . . . The speaker seemed unable to stand up and say, yes, I am indeed proud of the budget. It just wasn't there.

I am indeed happy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be able to address some of the issues today, and I'm pleased for the opportunity to stand up and to speak out for the people of Regina North and the people of the province that have been so callously and so cruelly hurt by the Conservative cuts. The real issues that I will be speaking about today include health care, education, Saskatchewan Government Insurance, co-operatives, Saskatchewan transportation, justice, and a few other areas. Believe me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, after waiting for so long for the government to call and recall this legislature, there is indeed an awful lot more to say than what time will allow me to say today.

Let me start with an area that is very near and dear to a caring Saskatchewan people. This Lane Liberal budget of betrayal attacks the sick and the elderly in a way that has absolutely no precedence since the free-enterprise right-wing parties of 25 years ago were attacking our medicare system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — The right-wing Conservatives and Liberals were predicting doom and gloom and certainly doom for a the health care. They were saying we could not afford it then. They're saying the same things now. The difference is now they form the government and now they are doing everything they can to see that their predictions of doom and gloom indeed come true.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — To start with, a portion of a letter that I received just recently. It was a copy of a letter sent to our Premier. "Dear Mr. Grant Devine:" and parts of the letter read:

After being in an AV accident last April '86, I have seen several physicians, tried prescriptions, and attended physiotherapy without success.

In August of '86 after my family physician told me that I should quit my job, and if I didn't, then I would probably have to eventually anyway, I decided to try a chiropractor. After going for a few treatments, I finally found some relief for the first time which enables me to keep working. All doctors involved believe this to be a chronic condition.

I found that a few weeks of chiropractic therapy did help. If this cut-back had been in effect last August, I would not have been able to afford those services, and you would be paying me

unemployment insurance as well as more -s Government Insurance for more pain and suffering, as well as for a loss of my job in the only trade I know.

I'm sure that would cost a lot more than paying for my appointments as well as cost me a lot of extra undue pain and suffering as well as my job. I'm only one example. How many more are there like me that would cost you more in the long run?

The letter concludes:

I think you should seriously re-consider this limitation before it is passed.

That was a letter sent to our Premier.

I have another letter I'd like to read parts of. This one to the Minister of Health.

Dear Mr. McLeod: We wish to object most strongly to your government's proposal to limit chiropractic treatments to 12 visits per year. It was our understanding during the past two provincial election campaigns that with Progressive Conservatives in office our Saskatchewan health-care systems would be protected and maintained at the level in existence and, in fact, improved upon to remain the best health-care system in Canada. Are we to assume (the letter goes on) are we to assume that all future claims and promises by your government and/or party will be suspect?

It continues:

Our daughter recently informed us that medication for her 8-year-old son's allergies has been removed from the drug plan, and henceforth they must pay the full cost of this medication required on a daily basis (Mr. Deputy Speaker). We ask you and your government to give serious consideration to maintaining our health care systems so all residents — all residents of Saskatchewan have a right to equal access of all forms of health care.

One last real short letter that really sums up the health care thing in a nub. And this is the most concise letter that I have received on the subject.

Mr. Kim Trew, Regina North. I say no to any health cuts in any way and no to any cut in our chiropractics. I wish this government would leave things as it was before they came into power.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — And I thank my constituent for sending me that very crisp and clear letter. These are just a tiny sample of the letters that I've received.

The changes to the dental plan are typical of the arrogance of this government. Yes, arrogance. You heard it. More than 400 people, mostly dental therapists,

have been fired. This government continues, by that action it continues to blame the working women and the working men of Saskatchewan for the deficit.

The government looks for ways to cut service. And where does it look? Health care. The Saskatchewan dental plan for young people used to cover young people for 11 years of their lives — the formative years of their dental habits and the formative years of their permanent teeth. In this budget the coverage has gone from 11 years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from kindergarten to age 16, down to eight years, kindergarten to 13.

The total reported expense — and this is interesting — that the total reported expense of the dental plan were according to the most recent dental plan annual report, \$11.4 million. Or stated another way, there's 11 years worth of student population. Each year of the student coverage cost \$1.036 million. The new reduced program using dentists instead of dental therapy will cost, according to the Minister of health, no more than \$9.7 million; or broken down on a per-year basis for student population, \$1.212 million.

Using the new coverage of eight years, the additional cost to taxpayers by using dentists instead of dental therapists . . . Remember now, this is an additional cost to the taxpayers that you're perpetuating on using the name of saving money. And it's completely false. It is not true; simply that. It is not saving any money. The additional cost to taxpayers using dentists is \$1.408 million. If you were to maintain the coverage for 11 years, the additional cost would be just under \$2 million. And I'd like to just hear somebody deny that, because it's undeniable. The numbers come from your own statements, the government's statements, the government's records. It's totally undeniable. It's not, the cutting of the dental program is not in any way, shape or form designed to save one thin dime. In fact it's costing the taxpayers money.

This budget of betrayal certainly does not deliver efficiency in the children's dental program, and it does not deliver efficiency to the more than 400 dedicated people who delivered dental correction and dental education to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Let me read a portion of a letter in yesterday's *Regina Leader-Post*. It too is from a constituent of mine, and it's a very, very well-written letter. I wish time would permit me to read it all:

I understand how my daughter is feeling. I know that she is sad, disappointed, and frustrated. So am I.

When we came from Chile more than nine years ago, fleeing from a cruel dictatorship, she was only a Grade 11 high school student . . .

I remember how happy I was when she decided to apply to the Wascana Institute and to become a dental therapist. She was accepted and started to work hard, very hard . . .

. . . She became a dental therapist after two years of exhausting work. And how proud her mother and I were.

. . . I remember her telling me how wonderful this plan was, taking care of thousands and thousands of children across the province in places where dentists never went and never would go.

The letter goes on:

. . . The, rumours began to circulate that the dental plan would be abolished . . . I advised her to relax, because I never believed that a progressive government would do something like that. Medicare is sacrosanct in Saskatchewan. But rumours become reality (all) too often in this province.

Finally, she and all the staff of the dental plan were assembled at the Regina Inn . . . she and her colleagues were separated in little groups; each group had to go to different rooms; the doors were locked and she was told that the Saskatchewan Dental Plan was almost totally cancelled . . . She was laid off. A psychiatrist was on hand.

That's the only kindness there has been so far. The letter goes on:

She called me by telephone . . . I could not believe it, but it was sadly true. I wanted to be with her, to embrace her and to say something. I understand how she was feeling, because the very same thing happened to me in Chile, when I was fired from my position as principal of a school for mentally retarded children, the victim of a military dictatorship.

Concluding, the letter states:

I understand my daughter, (and) her colleagues and their parents. I understand their sadness, their frustration and their indignation. I know that it does not only mean the end of a job, but the end of a career in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is the most damning indictment of this government that I have seen in a long, long time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1945)

Mr. Trew: — Turning to the prescription drug plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this budget destroys what was the best prescription drug program in Canada, and it attacks people with chronic health problems.

The government says people are using too many drugs. It conveniently ignores the fact that it's the medical doctors that prescribe the drugs. What the government appears to be saying is that it has absolutely no faith in the doctors of Saskatchewan. The reason given for the change in the drug plan indicate that the Devine Conservative

government thinks that it understand medicine better than the medical doctors.

Are we to start greeting the members opposite as Dr. Devine, Dr. McLeod and Dr. Lane?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. I would ask members not to use other members' names during debate. You can refer to them as their position or as their constituency.

I can read the chapter to you if you want me to — page 104, paragraph 319 — but I would ask members to refrain from using members' names.

Mr. Trew: — I apologize to the members opposite and to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What I really should have said is, are we to start referring to the members opposite as Dr. Estevan, Dr. Meadow Lake, Dr. Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, and so on? And I submit, no. Dr. Doom and Dr. Death is more appropriate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recently spoke to the parents of a nursing student. This family resides in the riding of the Minister of Tourism, Small Business and Co-operatives. The young woman has colitis, which is a serious intestinal problem that requires constant use of medication. When I was speaking to her mother, her mother said, yes, my daughter just had a prescription filled and the druggist said, after July 1 that will be \$400. I said, my goodness, \$400 a month? And she said, no, it could last as little as two weeks — Mr. Deputy Speaker, as little as two weeks.

That, using simple mathematics, based on this young lady's past year of history with her health problem, she's going to be spending up front between 5 and \$10,000 per year just to live. This is a nursing student, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Where is she going to come up with 5 to \$10,000? After the rebate, after the generous rebate that the Finance minister and the Health minister tell us so grandly about, after the rebate, this student is going to be spending between 1 and \$2,000 a year on drugs for a problem that is none of her . . . it's not any fault of her own. It is a health problem that she is inflicted with. And what's the government do? It just charges her money. I say it's a shame.

Yet the Minister of Health would have us believe that she is somehow abusing our drug plan. She has this strange need — she wants to live, she wants to live an ordinary life. I say, bless her, good for her; we should be helping her, not putting up road-blocks.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Another woman that I spoke to recently, Mr. Deputy Speaker, happens to be a resident of my constituency. And I'd like to recite just a few of the things that this woman has had happen to her since the October 20 election.

First, the government abolished her civil service job, so she was, is unemployed. Then she looked around and decided, well, here's maybe an opportunity; maybe

there's a silver lining somewhere; maybe I can improve my education. So she applied to the Wascana Institute to take business administration. The rest is history. That program was cancelled along with many others and so she cannot go there. That program was cancelled.

This woman also has a health problem, Mr. Deputy speaker. And also and behold, if the specialist that she sees isn't one of the 19 that was fired from the Plains Health Centre here in Regina. That means that when she has to go and see a specialist, the nearest specialist in that field is now in University Hospital in Saskatoon. That is a shame. That is causing undue hardship for this woman.

Then the story goes on. The litany goes on and on. It's almost as if the members opposite took this woman and decided, heh, how can we make life just as absolutely miserable as we possibly can for her.

Then they introduce the drug plan. And this woman tells me that last year in the prescription fees alone — and remember the doctors issue the prescriptions — in prescription fees alone she spent more than \$140 just in the dispensing fees alone. I have no idea what that's going to translate into in terms of cost for her drugs this year, but you can bet it will be many times the \$140. And that's a shame.

This budget of betrayal betrays young people through the elimination of the dental plan; it betrays the sick and the elderly through the elimination of the drug plan; and it betrays nursing home residents and elderly through a \$73 per month increase in the rent, in nursing home residents, and a 66 per cent increase in home care fees.

Mr. Speaker, the budget changes health programs from an investment to a cost. It used to be that health was an investment in good health. Often, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to treat somebody in a timely manner with some drugs or perhaps some chiropractic treatment would prevent a hospital stay, or perhaps in the case of elderly people, it would prevent them from having to go to a nursing home simply because they can't get around — they aren't as mobile.

So this budget clearly changes health from — what are the words I was using? — from an investment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, changes it from an investment to a cost.

I would like to turn to education for a moment, and I want to start with a portion of a letter that I received. This is from a Wascana Institute — actually from two students:

Dear Mr. Trew: We were pleased to see you show an interest in our situation at Wascana Institute. Your attendance at our meeting was appreciated. We regret that you were asked to leave before the meeting. The reason you were asked to leave was that (and there are two people named here that I will not name), but Mr. And Ms. (So-and-so) refused to attend if anyone other than students were present.

It seemed to be their purpose to keep everyone as much in the dark as possible. They both made empty statements, spouting meaningless rhetoric,

and they refused to field any open questions from the floor. This attitude left the students uninformed and frustrated.

The letter goes on:

Mr. Trew, we at Telecom have been told that we will have adequate time to complete our program. Adequate time has been open to interpretation and every time the question has been asked — what is adequate time? — we get a different answer.

Due to the nature of our course, we at Telecom are certain that some of our students, especially those just entered, will not be able to complete the program.

To reiterate, we have only verbal . . . pardon me, we have only heard verbal promises and have not seen anything in writing. Shame.

One of the corner-stones, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the Conservative election platform just eight months ago, was education. And let's look at some of the things that they've done, that members opposite have done in education. More than 130 instructors have been fired from Saskatchewan's technical institutes. More than 1,100 student positions have been absolutely eliminated from the technical institutes. Learning experience and opportunities in areas like nursing, business administration, dental programs and even farm safety related to the use of pesticide application, have been lost to more than 1,100 students and many, many more farmers and pesticide applicators.

The education development fund has been slashed from \$35 million last year to a measly \$14.5 million this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is what the Conservatives do in their lame liberal budget of betrayal. This is what they do to one of their Conservative election corner-stones.

An Hon. Member: — Pillar.

Mr. Trew: — Pillar. It's a pillar. They're going to somehow make the province go.

I just want to read a letter from a business administration student. This one is also a constituent of mine:

Dear Mr. Trew: I'm currently a first-year student attending the business administration course at Wascana Institute. Since you are the MLA in my constituency, I feel you would be the best person to hear my appeal.

The recent cut-back by the government is of great concern to me, because I fail to see how it will improve the education in Saskatchewan. I feel the main problem is enrolment, because last year when I signed up for the first year, there was a long waiting list, and I was placed into the night class.

This means that there will be that many more people enrolling in the second year at STI in Moose Jaw. This will cause many problems for me

and other students taking the second year of this supposedly two-year course.

Since we were informed of this cut-back only two weeks ago, it is quite late to be accepted in STI. This means that students here at Wascana will not be able to go to Moose Jaw for at least another year.

I think I'm making the point.

Education is absolutely decimated by the members opposite. The government with its budget of cuts, its budget of betrayal, is abandoning all hope for the future. It is cutting in the area that we need the most. Our very future is with the educated and educated population, a population, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is able to help lead us out of the quagmire that I am sure we are going to be inheriting in about three years or less.

Leaving education, there is at least one area that the government has never pretended was a corner-stone, and that's justice. That's never stopped the cuts.

I want to read to you a letter that I got . . . Actually I didn't get it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was addressed to the Hon. Gary Lane:

Dear Mr. Lane: Non-government organization workers are not responsible for creating the provincial deficit and should not be expected to assist in its reduction. On behalf of our thousands of clients across the province, we're informing you that our services cannot be cut back any further. There is no fat to trim.

The people we serve are the most powerless in society: abused and assaulted women and children, the unemployed, the hungry, and the disabled. For many reasons it is difficult for our clients to speak out. Often they have already been silenced by a system that isolates and excludes them. Many fear they will lose what little they have if they publicly question injustice.

That is why we are telling you that their services cannot be cut back any further without incurring a great deal more human suffering.

I think that's pretty clear. The letter goes on:

May we remind you that NGOs exist because Saskatchewan communities identified a need for our services. As non-governmental organizations, we are run by community boards made up of individuals who volunteer their time and energy to support the work we do.

Now you are telling communities across the province that their priorities are not your priorities, that your government is prepared to sacrifice the needs of the most powerless in society in order to chisel away at the deficit. NGO workers cannot help reduce the deficit because we cannot afford to cut our services any more.

We have been consistent practitioners of fiscal restraint; we have always run on shoe-string budgets; we have been forced to hold bake sales and bingos to earn additional funds we desperately need. We believe we have done more than our share of work within the confines of the meagre budgets we receive. We have accepted minimal budget increases in the past few years; we have worked with wages substantially lower than our counterparts in other jurisdictions and have handled large and unwieldy client case-loads.

(2000)

You attempt to appeal our sense of obligation to Saskatchewan taxpayers. We in turn appeal to your responsibility to the public. Why does your government not consider the most obvious solution, reducing the deficit at the expense of those who can actually afford it? Tax incentives, subsidies to large and profitable corporations, should surely be the first to be cut back. Government hand-outs to the corporate sector cost taxpayers millions of dollars a year.

The growing list of patronage appointments for high-profile Conservative supporters and defeated cabinet ministers calls into question your sincerity when you embark on an austerity campaign. It is time to re-evaluate your priorities. We urge you to stop the attack on those who can least afford it.

Organizations like the John Howard Society, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to speak about them for a little while. This is a group that has a half century of history servicing Saskatchewan people. The John Howard Society has long worked to prevent crime. I'll come back to that — crime prevention — in a minute. But there are some other services provided by that group of intensely dedicated people. One service is to keep incarcerated people in contact and in touch with the outside world. They carried messages between the outside families and incarcerated people. Then, on completion of the sentence, the John Howard Society works directly with the person to help that person adjust back into our society.

This is just a part of the crime prevention work done on our behalf. To keep people from crime they often need a caring hand to find shelter, food, and even to help in a job search. This is in grave danger, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's in grave danger of disappearing because of the lack of commitment to justice. Seems strange when you realize that the former minister of Justice is now the Minister of Finance, and the former minister of Finance is now the Minister of Justice — the destructive duo.

I point out to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the annual report of the Saskatchewan Farm Ownership board. This ended for the year ended March 31st, 1986, well over 12 months ago. And yet here we have a picture of what we think is the minister, and it happens to be the current Attorney General, the member from Kindersley. And his picture is there. Looks like it may be taken a couple of years ago before he got quite as grey, but his picture's there.

Inside in the organizational chart, what do we have? It names the minister. I'm not sure if it's proper to read it, so I'll just say the minister is the Hon. Minister from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden. It's funny after more than a year the Bobbsey twins are still totally interchangeable even in the eyes of the government.

But changing the seats on the Titanic most certainly would not have prevented it from sinking, and changing the seats in the Conservative cabinet will not prevent the conservative government from sinking. It is going down.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — I want to look at Saskatchewan Government Insurance for a few moments, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Rumours of a sale, or should I say give-away, are persistent. The Devine Conservatives have split the SGI property insurance fund from the auto fund. Then it slowed the SGI advertising and allowed the property insurance share that SGI enjoys, to go from 58.4 per cent in 1983, all the way down to 43.9 per cent in '84, and a further drop to 41.7 per cent in 1985. That's good Tory management that did that.

It's the same Conservative management that cost Prince Albert Pulp Company to lose money every year under Conservative rule despite the undeniable profits that PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) made under Allan Blakeney's New Democrats. And surprise, surprise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in its very first quarter of operation the giant American firm, Weyerhaeuser, declared an earning of \$5 million on that very same mill that the members opposite couldn't turn a nickel from.

The incompetent managers are sitting in the seats opposite. The public records show that, and it is impossible for this government to deny it any longer.

Continuing with SGI, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me read a paragraph from a speech given by Tom Johnston in 1944. For the education of some of the members opposite, Tom Johnston was the newly elected Speaker of this very legislature in 1944, and he says:

When enterprises that should be properly recognized as public utilities are being operated by private interests to the detriment of the general welfare of the people of the province, then it becomes the duty of the government to act on behalf of the people to make sure that these enterprises are conducted in such a way as to yield the maximum benefit to the entire community.

It's interesting to note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that during the same session of the legislature the CCF were to introduce a number of pieces of legislation that endure until today.

The Department of Social Welfare endures today — somewhat reduced by the members opposite, but it endures. Unfortunately I can't say the same for the department of co-operatives and co-operative development that was introduced in 1944. That department has been decimated, and I'll have more on that later.

But, as well, there was industrial development as Saskatchewan got its first collective bargaining legislation, and vacation-with-pay legislation was introduced in 1944. Those are just a few of the initiatives taken by the CCF in 1944. Those are some of the things that I am very proud of.

All of these actions were as a result of the way in which the CCF viewed the role of the government. This view was most vividly expressed by Tommy Douglas's words in his throne speech of 1944, and I quote from Mr. Douglas. My apologies, I don't have Tommy's speaking voice but I will use his quote anyway:

It is the feeling of my government that the day is past when it can be left to the forces of private enterprise exclusively to develop the resources of the community and to organize the business activity. The modern economy is a complex one that demands control and direction if disaster and chaos are to be averted.

That, from Tommy Douglas.

With SGI, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to give a brief history lesson. In its first year of operation, SGIO showed a modest surplus — and I'm sure you'll recognize it's pretty modest — \$6,388. This government spills more than that on a good day. SGIO grew steadily. By 1950 the insurance office was managing a \$770,000 surplus while still offering reasonable rates. Coverage was extended to include collision and property damage, as well as injury, death and liability. SGIO, that quickly, had become a leader in the industry.

SGI had succeeded to ensure that fair pricing for insurance within the province of Saskatchewan was attained. In 1945, prior to the formation of SGIO, fire and supplemental insurance cost an average of \$8.40 per \$1,000 of coverage right here in Regina. The reason for this reduction is clearly stated in SGIO's 1955 Annual Report where it states:

The competition of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office has forced other companies to look over their rates, and it is impossible to calculate, except in very approximate figures, how much SGIO has saved not only its own policy holders, but those who continue to insure with line companies and independents.

Direct government invention in the industry produced the desired result. That is reinsurance that met the needs of Saskatchewan people and at a reasonable price.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, despite SGI's success over 43 years, this government wants to give it away. Why? Does the fact that socialists brought in government insurance, does that blind you so much to the obvious truth? You know, socialists also brought in medicare, rural electrification, the best road and highway system in North America. And indeed, the government is attacking those areas also. Medicare cuts were outlined earlier in my

address to the budget speech.

Sask Power has seen its long-term debt under the Conservative government go from \$1.1 billion to more than \$2.7 billion. That's well over double in about five years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and this doubling of debt, or more than doubling of debt for Saskatchewan Power Corporation, is a millstone around its neck.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the roads and the highways in this province have all been redesigned for active tourists. Let me elaborate a little bit. Now when tourists are tired of bouncing along like they're on a trampoline, all they have to do is stop their vehicle, get out the golf clubs, and lo and behold, they can enjoy a ready made golf course, 18 holes to the kilometre almost anywhere in the province you care to go.

The Minister of Tourism may want to start promoting Saskatchewan's roads as the largest roller-coaster system in the world. Many highways, Mr. Deputy Speaker, bear very little resemblance to the highway system that this government inherited from a socialist party five years ago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, co-operatives are an integral party of Saskatchewan's social and economic fabric. The Conservatives opposite just went through the same election we did. My question is: how many voters heard any Conservative candidate say, we will abolish the department of co-operation and co-operative development? How many voters heard any candidates say that? I suggest none.

And not once, Mr. Deputy Speaker, did I see that in writing. I don't think we should have seen it. And why not? It's simple. The Conservatives knew that they would not get elected if they told the people of the province, if they came clean and if they told the people of the province what their real intentions are. And now we're seeing those intentions unfolding, and now we are desperately fighting an unfair, deceitful budget. It is a sad day for Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Pardon me, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker. It's a sad day for Saskatchewan when co-operatives disappear. And they knew they wouldn't get elected.

I invite the minister responsible for the now department of tourism, consumer affairs, and co-operatives, and note where co-operatives is, right at the very end — tourism, consumer affairs, and co-operatives. It isn't even alphabetical if you look at it. They really show their commitment to co-operatives. I invite the minister to explain how co-operatives will benefit by the elimination of the department of co-operatives. Just tell me how, how is service is improved? Who will advocate co-op housing? Who is going to advocate soil conservation co-ops, worker co-ops, production and consumer co-ops? Who is going to do it?

The minister may not realize but co-ops are a distinct part of Saskatchewan. Co-ops are big employers, when you add up all of the co-op stores in our great province; when you add up all of the pool elevators and the other operations that the pool has; when you add up the co-op day care and the co-op farms and the machinery co-ops, and the soil conservation co-ops and the worker co-ops.

The co-operative sector, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, the co-operative sector placed 26 businesses in the top 100 in Saskatchewan last year, yet this government ignores the reality. It talks of diversifying and building, but I submit that in tough economic times co-operatives are needed more now than at any other time in our history. They're more needed now than ever before. What's the government done? It virtually abandons co-operatives.

An Hon. Member: — That's terrible.

Mr. Trew: — It is terrible, as the member for North West points out, and it's particularly terrible when you realize that the government is just falling all over itself trying to give away literally hundreds of millions of dollars to the oil industry and Weyerhaeuser and people like Peter Pocklington.

I want to touch briefly on Saskatchewan Transportation Company briefly. There are rumours of it being sold. And I just want to protest. I'm being told, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, that I've taken quite enough time. But I'd like to ask the member responsible for Saskatchewan Transportation Company, that when he's talking to any company that's interested in purchasing STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company), that he talk and tell them about a resolution passed at the New Democratic Party annual convention this past weekend. And the resolution is fairly short, so I'm going to read it.

(2015)

It goes:

Whereas the Saskatchewan Transportation company serves all residents of Saskatchewan in all areas of our large province, and whereas the high cost on profitable remote lines that provide passenger and freight service to people would not be maintained by a privatized Saskatchewan Transportation Company, whereas the Saskatchewan Transportation Company is persistently and widely reported to be for sale, be it resolved that if sold, the next Saskatchewan New Democratic government will regain ownership of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, being sure that any interim private owner does not profit one dime in the ownership transfer.

That was passed unanimously at our convention this past weekend.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, I was going to talk about the oil revenues. The member for Saskatoon South pointed out yesterday that here was more than \$1.7 billion of revenue foregone by this government in that important area.

I'll have more to say on that another day. But just before closing, I have one short letter — and I want to thank the Premier and the members opposite for me getting this letter.

Dear Mr. Trew: I have just finished writing a letter to our Premier. The recent actions of his government are completely insensitive to the people of this province. I feel especially sorry for the poor and unemployed. I have always voted NDP in this province, and after watching the actions of this government in the last five years, I have come to appreciate the NDP even more. I feel sorry for the government that will have to pick up the pieces after the regressive Conservatives have finished and been sent packing. Please keep up the struggle to make this government answerable for their actions.

Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, because of these reasons, I will be voting for the amendment and against the motion on the budget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to speak on behalf of the government with respect to a budget that has been prepared very carefully over a long period of time, a period that was not easy. And we are in a period of Saskatchewan history that is not easy. But it gives me an honour to explain some of the aspects of the budget.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not be reading any letters. Since the friends of the NDP are on strike, I no longer get any letters, so I won't be reading any letters today.

But mostly what I want to talk about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is where Saskatchewan is now, and why it is there, and how we're going to get out of this. And where we are now is in a difficult financial situation. There are several reasons. Some of them the fault of the members opposite, and some of them no one's fault, but strictly world conditions. But for the most part, the problems that this province faces financially are based on commodity prices and the fact that we export 75 per cent of what we produce in this province, and as a result of the world trade situation being the way it is, not very free, we are suffering, and therefore we are suffering financially in many, many ways.

But why did Saskatchewan get into this position? Partly because of world trade problems and partly because of the actions of the former government when commodity prices were high. Their view of diversification is to buy more resources when you already rely on resource industries, and therefore they made an unfortunate mistake of buying holes in the ground — holes for potash and holes for uranium. And these holes are now a bottomless pit into which the treasury of Saskatchewan has to add our hard-earned tax dollars.

As comparison, during that period of time, 1974-1981, what should have been seven fat years in Saskatchewan where we should have saved and invested for the future, we were buying holes in the ground and the government of Alberta was building petrochemical plants, not through the government, but through encouragement of private enterprise. They were building processing plants, and Alberta now has a diversified economy as compared to Saskatchewan.

But in the situation we're in, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have not seen fit in the past . . . And to the members opposite who aren't listening now, don't care to listen, aren't interested in anything except a planned economy, that is the mentality of the members opposite, that they never learn. They don't even learn from their mistakes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The members opposite don't learn from their mistakes, and that's why they were defeated in the 1986 election, and that's why they're such a danger to the future of Saskatchewan.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there must be solutions. There must be short-term and long-term solutions. And they are three-fold. The first solution we have to look at is the fiscal management of Saskatchewan. Now it is agreed and acknowledged that this province has a deficit. And there is much discussion over what caused it and how we got it, but we have a deficit for many reasons. First of all, as we know, the farm economy has been very, very poor in the last few years, and now the members opposite somehow would like to relate that to our government. But certainly we as a government who are in favour of free trade cannot be responsible for the restrictive trade practices that the members opposite promote. So therefore we were in a position where our Premier said he would stake the province's treasury on agriculture. And he did, and we have a deficit. And we do not apologize for helping our friends, 70,000 farmers. We don't apologize for that. You suggest we help our friends; we are pleased to help our friends. There are thousands of them out there and they needed help and they've received it from this government. So therefore part of the treasury has been used to keep agriculture surviving through a difficult period of time.

Part of the deficit is due to low taxes. Now does anyone say that our taxes were too low, therefore we have a deficit? No, it's not a criticism you hear, but our taxes have been low in comparison to other provinces. And therefore part of that deficit is actually in the pockets of the taxpayers or it's money that taxpayers had to spend over the last five years.

Another factor in the deficit is declining revenues. I can recall in the inflationary times of the 1970s when inflation was running as high as 12 per cent. The social planners opposite planned and spent 17 per cent per annum. So that when we had high inflation and revenue coming in, the social planners always spent more than was coming in. So there was hidden deficits and a plan whereby the government continuously spent more and more money. And therefore this province got into a habit of having more and more revenue.

But the facts are that since we introduced income tax in this province, and I wouldn't say we introduced it although it maybe necessary, but since the income tax has been introduced to this province, the revenue has constantly gone up to the government, except till we get to 1985. This is the first year in the history of this province that income tax revenue actually went down. That has to tell you some things. That has to tell you that the income of some people is going down in 1985 and 1986.

Now when you look at the statistics, the reason the

income tax revenue went down in 1985 and 1986 is because farmers had no income to pay tax on. So it doesn't pay for us to stand here and point fingers at each other and accuse each other of blame. These are the realities. This is where we are in Saskatchewan, and it has to be dealt with.

In addition, there's other things that lead to a deficit. You have to either raise your low taxes or reduce your spending.

And so we have these so-called free services, like free dental, and free drugs, and free medical, and free everything, and the members opposite try to think of new other free services, except they don't ever point out that there is nothing free, and that sooner or later this has to be paid for.

As a result of a lot of things being free, taxes being low, world commodity prices being difficult, we have a deficit. We're at the stage now where we have to deal with it.

First of all, as a government over the last four years, this is nothing new to us. We pointed this out, that there was difficult times in agriculture.

We took away the PIG, the property improvement grant, because it wasn't just that. It gave everybody tax refunds which they could spend in Florida, Hawaii or anywhere they wanted to. They didn't have to invest in their house, they didn't have to improve their property. So we removed the PIG.

We replaced it with a property improvement grant, or the type of . . . the home owner's program, whereby you have to match the spending 50-50. And that has caused a boom in building in Saskatchewan and created many, many jobs.

But we recognized that this province had a deficit and we took some actions, and they weren't very popular. As a matter of fact, there was such a hue and cry about a small, used-car tax, that we removed it.

We've looked at the situation but the people haven't brought themselves to the position of facing reality, that you cannot borrow for ever. And this government borrowed for a period of time to cushion this province through what we believed would be a short cycle of low commodity prices. But that cycle has stretched out into quite a long period of years. We're now at the stage where even a government that tries to cushion the people cannot cushion the people cannot cushion the people for ever.

And we now have to face the reality. And we have to face the reality of the past and the present. The reality of the past is that when there was money, it was squandered, and in the present there is no money. So we have to live within our means.

The second point that this government is trying to accomplish in a difficult fiscal situation is the protection of our people. And so therefore we have struggled very hard to protect people in health care, to protect people in education, to protect people in social services, justice, and so on. And I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it

hasn't been easy trying to balance the interests of protecting people with the limits as to how much we can borrow and how much of the burden we can pass on to our children. In this province, we think there has to be a balance between how much the deficit should be and how much we should pay today.

We don't operate on the same principles as the socialists in the province of Manitoba who have decided that they don't have a spending problem, they have a revenue problem. So they increased their taxes, and they still have, after \$500 million of equalization money from Ottawa, a deficit that is greater than ours. And the deficit of Manitoba is helped very much by an equalization formula, to which the former premier, as he then was and many of the members opposite when they were in government, agreed to, whereby commodities such as oil would be imbalanced in the calculations. So that when we raise taxes or revenue in this province by \$1, 95 cents comes off our equalization and goes to the balance of Canada, a large chunk of that going to the province of Manitoba. So when the people of Saskatchewan pay an extra dollar in taxes, they should know because of the formula established by the former premier of Saskatchewan, they are actually benefiting the province of Manitoba with their taxes.

And we are working hard to change this formula, but it's not easy because the province of Manitoba has a habit of crying for more money from Ottawa rather than working to solve their problems. So therefore we are in a competition with the crying of the province of Manitoba and the hard work of our people trying to be self-sufficient.

A third element of what this government is trying to do in this budget is diversification. And this is a very nasty word to the members opposite. It is something that they don't like because diversification goes against the grain of socialism, and socialism only allows for one kind of business and that is government business. So therefore they don't like upgraders, they don't like electric cable plants in Moose Jaw, and they don't like bacon plants, they don't like paper plants, they don't like recreational vehicle plants, because none of these are owned by the government. But this government is working hard towards diversification and you have to have some degree of balance, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I suggest that most of balance is on this side of the House. But you have to have some degree of balance between how much you can tax, how much you can borrow, and how much you can protect people, and how much you have left over to build the economy for the future.

(2030)

So we've been working towards a balanced budget. We've reduced spending, we've reduced the number of employees by 10 per cent — a difficult decision, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I want you to take note that we've tried to do this in the most humane way possible. But 75 per cent of the people either left the government through early retirement or through vacancies not being filled. But the solution that the members opposite would have would be to raise taxes even more. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have raised taxes, and for that I am sorry. I do

not like to raise taxes but here are few choices, and there are no alternate solutions raised by the opposition or the independent member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I mean, would the members opposite say, raise taxes even more? Would they say, cut government spending even more? Would they say, borrow even more? They say all of those. Well which should we do, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

So it is not a simple process to govern. It is very complex. It is a great responsibility and it takes an awful lot more thought than being a critic in opposition.

So in addition to reducing spending, we have tried to improve government efficiency. One example would be in the Workers' Advocate office which I have had as minister now for a year and a half. And when I took over as minister they had a backlog of 125 cases, which I am pleased to say has now been reduced to 37 cases the day we are in this debate. And that has been done with no extra people but with efficiency and good management.

Those are the kind of things that this government is doing to bring the government under control, and we probably should have been a little more firm in the last few years but . . . I mean, we were trying to be gentle about weaning the people of Saskatchewan from socialism and the ways of an easy life based on commodities.

We have raised taxes and I've brought that out, and I said I'm sorry that that had to be done. No Conservative ever raises taxes with pleasure. No free enterprise capitalist likes taxes at all because we believe that the people should be allowed to go about their business.

On the contrary, the members opposite hoot and holler because they don't believe that the people should have any business. The people should all be slaves to the state, working in their little positions, all for the benefit of the ruling elite. That's the theory of the members opposite. It is the modern theory of slavery called socialism.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased with the budget. It has been difficult. I am saddened that taxes had to be raised. We would not want to have to do some of the things that have to be done, but I am pleased with the budget because we have done the right thing. We have done what is proper, not what is popular, and that is responsible government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Now some examples in the Department of Social Services, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In the Department of Social Services we have looked at providing as much service as is possible under the circumstances, and every time the members opposite ask for a new service, they should be required to point out how the money would be raised.

As the minister, I've had to deal with a constant budget, a budget that has not been cut, but a budget that is approximately the same as last year. And what we've tried to do is continue with welfare reform in order to help those who were needy, and in particular to help them make themselves self-sufficient where possible.

Welfare reform to prevent abuse, welfare reform to simplify the system — and we are now in the process of reducing the welfare application form from 16 pages to five pages. We think this will be more efficient, it will be easier for the clients to help themselves in filling out the form.

We will make other changes in the Department of Social Services with a view to freeing social workers to do social work. Over the years, social workers have become financial control officers, they have become bureaucrats, and they haven't been able to do social work for which they are trained. And we will take some action to remedy this situation and make it possible for social workers to concentrate on social work.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, social services is a costly expenditure in the province of Saskatchewan. We spend in excess of \$1 million per day, and that is a large amount of money, \$375 million. And in order to do that efficiently, we've made some management changes.

We are trying our best to become more efficient, and my deputy minister has been transferred to Manitoba, where he now is the deputy minister for the Manitoba government, and I'm sure he will be an asset to that government. Since the Government of Manitoba has the lowest welfare rates in western Canada, I'm sure that my former deputy can help them try to get their rates in line with the balance of western Canada.

As a matter of fact, in Saskatchewan, while I would like to raise our rates — and I will do so as soon as possible — we, with respect to families, are number two in Canadian what we pay to families on social services, and I am optimistic and targeting that before the end of the year that we would be number one in the amount of money we pay to families.

With respect to single employables, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we believe in a different form of strategy from the members opposite. They talk about a guaranteed income, and we tend to lean more towards a guaranteed job.

And it's the view of this government that everybody should have sufficient money to live on, but that they should do something to help in society, whatever they are capable of doing. And therefore we do not think that community service work is demeaning; we do not think that work training is demeaning; we believe that most people wish to do the most they can in accordance with their ability; and we will continue on projects and reform leading in that direction.

In the Department of Social Services the members opposite like to go through their usual exercise in fearmongering where they say there is cuts, cuts, cuts, cuts, cuts, cuts — they're like a stuck record. And they go on and on with their song of cuts, cuts, cuts.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has been necessary to pick priorities in the Department of Social Services as in all other elements of government, and therefore one of the priorities we have picked is a community living plan, whereby at the request of the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded and the Canadian community

living association, they have asked that we move adult retarded people into the community wherever possible. And we've taken what I consider to be a bold initiative because someone had to do the act that may be unpopular, the phasing out of North Park in Prince Albert, an institution.

Now if you're going to take people out of institutions and put them into communities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you're eventually going to have to close an institution. And that task has fallen on me as Minister of Social Services to do what has to be done. And if it is right, which the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded tells me it is right to have handicapped people live in the community, then I'm prepared to do the right thing even if it is not popular with the members opposite, even if it is not popular with those people who have vested interests in keeping these people in institutions.

This government is prepared to do the right thing, and we're prepared to go about it in a very fair manner. And what we're doing at North Park in Prince Albert is that we are consulting with the relatives and parents of these individuals, and we are going through a lengthy process to have people moved into the community in whatever way they can live in the community. Some of the people who are senior citizens we will attempt to locate in nursing homes and special care homes for senior citizens. Other people will go into group homes. Other people will go into special group homes that are not built yet, and when they are ready, they will be available to move there. And we will do everything possible, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I realize this particular institution is in your constituency. We will do everything possible to keep people in Prince Albert, because if they come from that area, that's their community, and we will take all measures possible.

This is not a matter of money, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a matter of doing what's right, and we intend to transfer the costs of running the institution over to keeping people in their communities. And I think you will see over a period of months, maybe a year, however long it takes, that this will be good for the individuals, and this will be good for the community because we will have all types of people living in the community, and that we will accept them as part of the way God made people, and it will be good for society and it will be good for the individuals.

But we talk about what is actually happening in the Department of Social Services, and what we have heard is an awful lot of rhetoric, and this is not a time for rhetoric in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is a time for firm and fair action. It's a time for people to look at really what is happening, and I'd like the members on the government side — I don't think the members opposite will listen or pay attention or understand — but I would like the members on the government side to listen closely so that the majority, the government, will clearly understand what we are doing with respect to third party grants. I want you to look at what isn't cut.

There is a shifting of priorities, but I'm going to go through a lengthy situation here, an exercise in showing you what exists for services in this province with respect only to

third parties, and not the other 350-some million dollars of expenditure in my department. We have the early childhood intervention program. This is a preventive service with respect to young children from birth to age five. It's under the sponsorship of community boards to provide staff and assist parents and to provide facilities.

And we have the Alvin Buckwold Centre in Saskatoon which receives \$193,000; the Prince Albert early childhood intervention program which receives \$93,000; the parkland early childhood intervention program in Yorkton which receives \$81,000; the Lloydminster Association for the Mentally Retarded which receives \$56,000; the north-east early childhood intervention program in Tisdale, \$69,000; Regina infant stimulation program, \$106,000; the Battlefords early childhood prevention program, \$64,000; the west central early childhood intervention program, \$54,000; the Meadow Lake area early childhood program, \$53,000; the Weyburn program, \$36,000; Swift Current, \$53,000; Redvers, \$60,000; Moose Jaw, \$53,000; La Ronge, \$41,000; Ile-a-la-Crosse and Buffalo Narrows, \$42,000; and the Alvin Buckwold research laboratory in Saskatoon, \$505,000; for a total of \$1.1 million for early childhood intervention. And that is not a cut. These services are still there at a cost of \$1.1 million dollars.

The we have sheltered workshops. And in sheltered workshops we provide adult day programs with specialized employment opportunities for adults who exhibit fair motor development or who have minimal sensory limitations. Training and production are both components of this service. And I think many people in Saskatchewan are familiar with the sheltered workshops. Now we have these workshops in North Battleford at a cost of \$126,000; Estevan, \$69,000; Humboldt, \$57,000; Lloydminster, \$62,000; Meadow Lake, \$62,000; Moose Jaw, \$156,000; prince Albert, \$160,000; Rosetown, \$65,000; Rosthern, \$67,000; the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, in Regina, \$272,000 and Saskatoon, \$248,000; Swift Current, \$111,000; and in Yorkton, \$132,000. As a matter of fact, those are all increased as are most of the other ones increased slightly. Some are down a little bit, depending on the usage, depending on the need. The majority are up a little bit. Now where are the massive cuts?

In Weyburn we have the same facility for \$76,000; in Nipawin, \$83,000; in Moosomin, \$60,000; in Melville, my constituency, \$59,000, a reduction of \$10,000. However, the members opposite would probably jump up and declare instantly, look, you've cut the Melville workshop \$10,000. Well, that is the magic of paper. You can make it say what you want it to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And Melville has been reduced \$10,000 on its sheltered workshop but has received funding for an activity centre of \$10,000 for a net increase of \$10,000. Now what looked like a cut is actually an increase.

Now it depends on whether a fearmonger is telling you that there is a cut or on whether the government is showing you the actual figure. And that is what is disappointing about the members opposite, is that they are trying to scare the people of Saskatchewan needlessly. I said earlier that we have to live within our means, but there are no massive cuts in this province.

There are a few adjustments that I submit are necessary. But this goes on: in Shaunavon, \$72,000; in Outlook, \$59,000; in Langenburg, \$69,000; in Porcupine Plain, \$76,000; in Cudworth, \$78,000; in Preeceville, \$79,000; in Kronau, \$48,000; in Meadow Lake is under construction and is a partial year, \$67,000; Gravelbourg is partly under construction, will be coming on stream, \$82,000 — a total of \$2.5 million. And I might say that there is a reduction there on that table of \$74,000 on 2.5 million; however, as I indicated it's made up as in the case of Melville and other places.

(2045)

So you have activity centres. Activity centres provide adult day care programs designed for individuals who have limited motor and sensory development. The programs stress basic living skills, socialization, and recreation, and we have these programs in Battlefords, at \$152,000; in Regina, at \$314,000.

Now, for example, Battlefords is down \$48,000 and Regina is up \$10,000. And there's always an explanation for this. Regina has eight new spaces. Battlefords had a construction grant in '86-87 and an operating grant in '87-88, which means that they included in last year's budget construction costs which aren't there in this year's budget. Now it looks like a massive cut of \$48,000. However, I've just explained that construction is done, one-time capital and thereafter the operating comes into a normal cycle. So, if you were a fearmonger, you could look at that and say there was a massive cut. In actual truth there is no reduction at all; construction has been completed.

In Saskatoon the cost for the activity centre is \$964,000 and that is up \$58,000. Now would you say that is a massive increase? No, it is not a massive increase. It is 20 new spaces in Saskatoon.

Now, the members opposite suggest that they are bored. And I would ask them to pay close attention and learn something about how this province actually operates, and where the needy are, and what money is being spent, and stop constantly going around trying to scare the province. Pay attention, members opposite. I know that if you're not in your political rhetoric that you find it boring, but the people have to know what is actually being done.

In Humboldt the same amount is being spent, \$59,000; in Kindersley the same, \$65,000; in Melfort, \$112,000, which is a slight increase; in Moose Jaw, \$202,000.

Now, in Moose Jaw . . . I believe that is in the constituency of two of the members opposite, and they will be pleased to know that that has increased \$21,000 and there are eight new spaces in Moose Jaw. And I would expect that they would send me a letter and thank me for providing eight new spaces in Moose Jaw. And I do acknowledge that the member from Moose Jaw North does thank me on occasion when I do something that pleases him and I give him credit for that. And maybe, you know, he hasn't been here long enough to follow the antics of his colleagues there, but I do give him credit for giving me credit when we do something good.

The costs in Prince Albert are \$60,000 and that's also an increase. Now, I won't go into all the details of what is up or what is down, but I think you get the general pattern that some things are increased, some are decreased. And there's always a reason for these things. Would one think that a government would never review a particular program or would one think that government would pay for spaces that are not needed? We have to be flexible and from year to year adjust to the changes in society.

The Redvers program cost \$112,000; Swift Current, \$58,000; Wadena, \$117,000; Waldheim, \$21,000; Wynyard, \$22,000 — now they have a reduction of seven spaces, they don't have the need.

So would you say there's a massive cut in Wynyard when they haven't had a need for the seven spaces? But the reality is that Wynyard is down while others are up. Yorkton is \$64,000; Estevan, \$48,000, with four new spaces; Weyburn, \$42,000; Lloydminster, \$22,000 . . . I might say that in Lloydminster we're developing a problem there, workshop and activity centre was very self-sufficient when the oil industry was booming, and they provided services to the oil industry. Now that the oil industry is in a slump, they are finding it difficult to be so self-sufficient. They are the most self-sufficient activity centre and workshop in Saskatchewan.

So I will probably have to find extra money to tide them over until the oil recovers. But the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster appreciates what the oil industry . . . I mean whose cut-backs are those? I suppose they're cut-backs that you might blame on the world markets or that you might blame on the Iranians or whoever you want to blame, but that's the reality, and so we will have to . . . And I give a commitment to the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster, that we'll have to keep his workshop going. They are very much a free enterprise workshop and they don't even want to come to the government to ask for more money. They are pleased to be self-sufficient, but if they are in need we will help them.

In Rosetown the cost is \$23,000, and that's an increase from zero last year to \$23,000 this year, and it's one — a partial year. And Elbow I already referred to. A total of \$2.5 million for activity centres in the third-party grants.

Now we have community resource homes and outreach. Now resource homes are in Saskatoon and Regina. They provide short-term residential care for mentally handicapped persons who are temporarily unable to remain in their natural or foster home.

The outreach program is an extension of the resource home program designed to accommodate families throughout Saskatchewan who do not have access to the program in Regina and Saskatoon. In these instances funding can be made available to accommodate the handicapped person in his own home.

In Regina we spend \$78,000; Saskatoon, \$88,000; the outreach program for the balance of the province is \$132,000; and the Regina residences is \$38,000; for a total of \$336,000. That is a reduction in spending. However, what we have said is that the fees will be increased from \$5 to \$7 per day. Now this is something

that we don't like to do but we feel that the service is well worth the \$7 per day, and people will accept that respite type care at the cost of \$7 per day.

We have community holiday relief program, which is similar to the one I just referred to and that costs \$176,000. Then we have a supportive living program. This is to help people with handicapped children who are moderately or mildly retarded, keep them at home and keep them in their families, and these programs operate in various cities.

In Regina it's \$83,000; in The Battlefords, \$13,000; in Lloydminster, \$27,000; and Prince Albert it is \$27,000; in Yorkton it's \$32,000; Swift Current, \$26,000; Estevan, \$26,000; Moose Jaw, \$41,000; Saskatoon, 45,000; Humboldt, 5,000; Watrous-Davidson, 5,000; Wadena, 7,000; Huston Heights, Regina, 26,000; Rosetown, 16,000; Melfort, 13,000; Rosetown . . . The member from Melfort wanted to know that figure. It's \$13,000 in Melfort.

In Rosthern it's \$13,000; in Shaunavon, \$8,000, for a partial year; for a total of \$421,000, an increase of \$10,000 over last year.

So I don't think that's a massive increase, but on the other hand it certainly is not cut, and we have picked our priorities as to where the greatest the need is.

Now, we have consumer advocacy organizations, and in this category we have three.

We have the Canadian Paraplegic Association, which assists in vocational, educational, and professional training of paraplegics, and they're receiving \$65,000, the same as last year.

We have the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres, which is the provincial organization for activity centres, sheltered workshops, and subsidized industries, the ones I have just referred to.

And they have received an extra amount of money for a marketing position so that they can sell the products that the handicapped people produce. And they will have an increase from \$56,000 to \$82,000.

In the case of the Voice of the Handicapped, they are an advocacy group that doesn't represent specific handicapped organizations, which have their own organizations, such as the Canadian Paraplegic Association, and others, the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, and so forth. These are organizations that we fund to provide services.

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In the case of the Voice of the Handicapped, for their advocacy we've reduced their advocacy funding by half, and they will receive \$57,000 this year as compared to their \$91,000 last year.

Now I've had to pick the priorities, and we have picked as a government the provision of services to people rather than advocacy. So therefore you can see the pattern developing that we've had to pick our priorities. Now, it's not always easy, but we have to pick our priorities.

Now it's not always easy, but we have to pick our priorities.

Now, in general services, the Saskatchewan Abilities Council has vocational programs and they receive \$79,000 for that.

The interlake human resources program receives \$50,000 and the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded receives \$125,000. This is for the provision for direct services to the people that they represent.

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind received an increase to \$241,000 for expansion of the deaf-blind intervener program. This was an increase of about \$35,000.

The services for the hearing impaired was budgeted at \$375,000, and I believe we've now made an arrangement with SaskTel where SaskTel will take over this service and improve it considerably.

Now we also have grants for community services. And we have the crisis intervention service which provides after-hours information, referrals, crisis intervention, for people in crisis including emergency mandated services such as financial assistance and child protection, on behalf of the Department of Social Services — and I stress after regular working hours on weekends and holidays.

And these groups we have reduced their funding to reflect the provision of services after working hours and weekends and holidays. In any event they will still receive, in Regina, \$344,000; in Saskatoon, \$310,000; and in Prince Albert, \$194,000; for a total of \$849,000.

With respect to sexual assault centres, sexual assault centres provide co-ordination and 24-hour crisis telephone lines in support for victims of sexual assault, information and referral services, and public education programs. With respect to the Regina centre, we've asked them to reduce by one position with respect to our funding, which is in line with the provincial standard, and they will receive \$88,000. The Saskatoon sexual assault centre will receive \$39,000, the same as last year, as will North Battleford at \$22,000, and Lloydminster at \$22,000; for a total of \$171,000. The reduction there being one position in Regina, but as you will see, Regina receives \$88,000 and Saskatoon receives \$39,000, and we thought that there had to be some balance because the cities were about the same size. And surely the people of Regina are not more sinful or do not cause more problems than the people of Saskatoon. So we have tried to balance that.

With respect to family violence services, these services co-ordinate and provide services to victims of sexual assault, wife-battering and other family abuse, including 24-hour crisis answering services, information, referrals, and counselling. There we have made no change whatsoever, a total of \$267,000: \$36,000 at Kindersley; Melfort, \$36,000 for my seat-mate, a crisis centre, and \$71,000 for a safe house; Swift Current, \$36,000; Yorkton SIGN (Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours), \$36,900; Saskatoon Family Service Bureau

for battered women support, \$25,000; and the Family Service Bureau of Regina, \$25,000 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Now I don't know why the members opposite are laughing. They used to be fearmongering and now they're laughing. I don't understand their logic behind all this. What I'm indicating is that we have not been able to increase this amount. We have been struggling and we have struggled hard and kept it at the same amount.

With respect to residential crisis services, the transition houses provide short-term crisis counselling and support services to assist clients in re-establishing themselves in the community after leaving the facility. Transition house services are provided in individual residential facilities which are staffed on a 24-hour basis. All of the transition houses have received the same amount of money with the exception of the Regina transition house and the Yorkton transition house. Yorkton's added an increase of two beds, an increased funding. Regina had a reduction of funding for one and a half positions, being a half-time counsellor and an assistant administrator, the idea being that Regina's cost should be considered along the same lines of the balance of the province. So Regina receives \$230,000 and Saskatoon receives \$332,000, the same as last year. The Regina Native Women's Group, \$217,000; the Association of West Central Native Women in Prince Albert, \$208,000; The Battlefords Interval House, \$225,000; Moose Jaw's transition society, \$206,000; and Yorkton, \$203,000; for a total of \$1.6 million, which is about the same as last year and is actually a \$2,000 increase.

Now I agree, there has been some adjustment in this budget, but I certainly have pointed out very clearly that there has been no cuts. So now the members opposite are thinking of new angles in their fearmongering.

With respect to safe shelters, we have safe shelters that offer short-term accommodation, crisis counselling and support services to assist battered women, their children, and re-establishing themselves in the community. These are similar to transition houses. They are operated by the YMCA in Regina with identical funding of \$104,000. The La Ronge native women, \$108,000, which is an increase over last year, and in this category there is an increase of \$5,000, for a total of \$213,000.

(2100)

With respect to trusteeship services, there is a slight reduction from \$545,000 to \$519,000. Trustees provide money management services and budget counselling, counsel liaison, direct client support to low-income persons, receive financial assistance for the Saskatchewan assistance plan. In this area, the welfare rights associations in Regina received \$235,000; Saskatoon self-help, \$117,000; Prince Albert and district community services, \$91,000; Moose Jaw community action society, \$74,000, for a total of \$519,000 in that category.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I should continue to give the total picture of what is actually happening on third party grants and how my department is operating

because I think the members opposite need to know this so that they can correct themselves.

With respect to the friendship centres, they provide family worker programs. They are native run. They provide direct services to natives in counselling, information referrals, transportation, housing location, interpretation services to multi-problem families of native ancestry. We have centres in Yorktown. Most of these are federally funded, but we fund the counselling. We've standardized the counselling funding at \$27,000 per position: being one position in Yorkton, 27,000; Meadow Lake, \$27,000; North Battleford — there's a separate group in North Battleford — \$54,000 for two positions; Saskatoon and Métis friendship centre, \$54,000; Regina Friendship Centre, \$54,000; the Carlyle friendship centre, \$27,000; and the La Ronge friendship centre, \$27,000, for a total of \$324,000 towards native and Indian counselling.

An Hon. Member: — You're repeating yourself.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Now the member opposite is saying I'm repeating myself. No, I am not. These are the services we provide, and I do not repeat the services. These are how they exist. Now if the member is suggesting that there are too many of these, then she could send me a list of those she thinks are too extravagant, but this is what we are providing.

Native family services is another group of organizations funded by my department. And native family services are run by . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The members opposite are shouting so loud that I can't be heard here. The native family services programs are run by natives for natives, such as counselling, information referrals, transportation, similar to the ones I have just indicated, and the Métis Society of Saskatoon receives for this service, \$320,000; Regina Native Women's Association, \$118,000; the Lestock Women's Centre, \$79,000, and that is a reduction of one staff person from four to three, and I think that is reasonable under the circumstances; the Native Coordinating Council in Prince Albert, \$158,000; the Buffalo Narrows Native Women's Local, \$30,000; the Dene Kwan self help counselling group in LaLoche, \$63,000; LaRonge Native Women, \$33,000; the Fort Qu'Appelle Ka-Pa-Chee Centre, \$51,000; the Association of Métis and non-status Indians in Regina, \$118,000; and my Cree is not too good, but the Peyakowak (They are Alone Working) community group in Regina, \$130,000. That's for a total of \$1.1 million of native family service organizations in that category.

The family service bureaus provide professional counselling to individuals and a teen parent program. And I won't give you the individual figures, but they are situated in Regina.

An Hon. Member: — I think we should have the figures.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Some of the members on this side of the House would like the details. They want to learn exactly what . . . I will accommodate my colleagues and give them the details.

The Family Service Bureau of Regina receives \$105,000 for counselling, and teen counselling, \$24,000. They have received a reduction of \$3,000, but they had an increase of 10 per cent last year, so we felt that it had to be balanced a little bit; the Catholic Family Services society teen counselling, \$78,000 in Saskatoon, teen parent, \$24,000 for a total of \$103,000; the Saskatoon Family Service Bureau, \$106,000, and teen counselling, \$24,000, for a total of \$131,000.

If the members opposite would want to suggest, you know, tomorrow in *Hansard* that I'm misleading the House, I might say that I am rounding these figures off, and if I round them off, they could be out a thousand here or there. But I'm trying to give them, you know, the picture of what happens here.

Minto Family Life Education Centre in Moose Jaw, \$66,000, plus teen parent counselling of \$30,900, for a total of \$97,000. The total for counselling is \$435,000; the total for the teen parent program is \$129,000.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, can you hear me there, or need I shout because the members opposite are making such noise I'm not sure if you can hear me at that stage. Is it possible? Good, I am pleased that you can hear me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll continue.

The total being \$565,000 and that is for the Family Service Bureau.

With respect to family support, family support services provide a range of direct support services to individuals and families including individual and family counsel, information referrals, assessment therapy and crisis nursery program. We provided a program in Humboldt last year, and we are continuing it under review. We'll see what happens when we continue our review.

The Saskatoon Society for Protection of Children crisis nursery receives \$101,000 plus \$3,500 for co-ordination of education. The Cornwall Street Tutoring Project in Regina receives \$127,000; the SCEP Centre Society in Regina, \$131,000; the Merici Centre in Regina, \$200,000; Christian Counselling Services in Saskatoon, \$10,000. And the Regina crisis nursery was a program that was budgeted but never got started last year, so they received no money this year because they didn't get it implemented. The Friendship Inn in Saskatoon received \$30,000, and there was no allocation last year because we've moved this from the senior services centre; we've moved this from the senior services grants. And the total there is \$522,000 for family support services.

Now I understand the members opposite are losing their patience, but they should really check out these organizations. They are all throughout the province. They are very worthwhile. My colleagues here are pleased to hear about these services and the members opposite should go out into the world and see that these services still exist. And the members opposite should take this more seriously. I don't think they should be laughing and giggling, and I don't think they should be behaving in the manner they are.

I mean, actually I prefer them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when

they are fearmongering rather than when they were mocking programs that are important to people.

With respect to preventive services, we receive help from Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and we appreciate it very much. And we do not fund them for all of their activities, but we help out. And what we do is we have a contractual arrangement with Big Brothers and Big Sisters where we pay so much per match with the little sisters and little brothers and the matching. And the total there is \$162,000; and we are very pleased that they provide these services, and I won't go into the details.

With respect to youth services, these provide positive leisure time activities and services for youth who are at risk of becoming involved with the law. And there we contract to the John Howard Society of Moose Jaw for \$30,000, and the Prince Albert John Howard Society for \$46,000, for a total of \$76,000. And contrary to what the members opposite might have tried to lead you to believe, we have not terminated out the services of the John Howard Society with respect to my department.

The local provincial co-ordination is provided by S.M.I.L.E. (The Society for Maintaining and Improving Life in Estevan) in Estevan for \$32,000 and SIGN (The Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours) in Yorkton. We are reviewing the situation with SIGN in Yorkton; whether this administrative function can be afforded by our department or not. And I have indicated to them that we probably won't continue this but we will study it a little further.

With respect to other provincial co-ordination, the Saskatchewan Human Services Association receives \$83,000 to co-ordinate the services of the various social service agencies and the foster parents. The Saskatchewan Foster Parents Association has an increase to \$144,000 which provides an insurance plan for foster parents. And there will be other improvements in the foster care area which I have announced in Saskatoon. The end result will be about \$1 million extra spending on foster parents because we consider this a priority.

Now I admit we have had to reduce some spending in some areas, but we have also increased things to balance where the greatest need is. And I'm very pleased with what the foster parents are doing. We are going to give them additional training; we are going to give them the respect they deserve, and we are going to come up with some new services in the foster parents area. And what we're going to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is we are working them out with the foster parents association.

For example, the rates to foster parents, we have budgeted an increase of 6.5 per cent. And then we went to the foster parents association and we said . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, the member opposite says we've done nothing for native foster children, and I will inform her that the department, under the former deputy which I transferred to the province of Manitoba, did not ask the federal government for assistance in this regard. I spoke to the federal minister, and I said, why don't we have an agreement for native child care in this province? He said, because the province hasn't asked for one. I said, well, I'm asking, and we are now finalizing that agreement.

Now in all the years you were government, you didn't ask. In all the time that I had my former deputy, who is now the deputy in Manitoba — which should tell you something — he didn't ask. And that is why I'm very pleased to see that he'll be helping Manitoba. So there's the explanation. I'm very pleased you asked the question. I'm very pleased you raised it from your seat because we will have a native child care program because we have asked the federal government and they have given us the funding, and we are now working out the details with the bands.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — With respect to the foster care situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where I was when I was interrupted . . . And I thank you very much for the interruption. Please ask more question so that nature, because you don't ask any questions in question period, and this is a good time for you to ask them.

But what I'm saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we went to a foster parent and we said, is 6.5 per cent . . . We know it should be more, but we just don't have more right now. And they appreciate that we're trying our best and have come up with the 6.5 per cent.

And we said, will you work with our department to work out the allocation — where it would be fairest to put the increases on the age groups of certain children? And we have sat down with the foster parents association and have worked that out.

And I'm sure that they will be harassed by the members opposite for co-operating with our government, but I thank them very much for the courage of co-operating with us in trying to improve foster care. And I dissuade the members opposite from harassing the foster parents association for their own political purposes, because these people have co-operated very much, and we will assist them, and together we will improve the child care system in this province in a way that it has never been changed since we went away from orphanages and went to foster homes.

However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have group homes for mentally retarded adults. And I don't have to give a lengthy explanation of group homes, because I think even the members opposite understand them. The public understands them. Everyone understands them. But we have these group homes in cities and towns throughout Saskatchewan, and if any of the members would be interested in the specific sums spent in their community, they could let me know. But the total expenditure on group homes is \$4.4 million, which is a slight increase of about \$300,000 from last year, from \$4.1 million.

So the main reason for this is because there is greater need, and more spaces have been provided. With respect to group homes for physically disabled adults, which is a special category again, there's another \$994,000 and there's no reduction in any of these areas, and these homes are in Saskatoon, in Regina, and Prince Albert.

We also have group homes for emotionally disturbed

adults. These are residential treatment homes providing counselling, life skills, vocational rehabilitation training for emotionally disturbed adults, rehabilitative homes that provide supervision, and these are: the McKerracher House in Swift Current, \$119,000; Phoenix Residential Society, \$197,000 for Phoenix House; Lefave house, \$59,000; the Thunder Creek Rehabilitation Services in Moose Jaw, \$106,000; the Saskatoon Special Needs Housing Coalition, the Renaissance House, \$158,000; the Weber House, \$110,000; the Lakeland Council in Prince Albert, \$127,000; SIGN in Yorkton, \$63,000; Weyburn Group Homes, \$72,000; the Edwards Residential Centre, North Battleford, \$129,000; and the Libby Young Centre in Lloydminster, \$144,000; and there we have not a large increase, but \$8,000 more, for a total of \$1.2 million in the group homes for emotionally disturbed adults — no cut at all.

(2115)

Now, I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there may be some adjustments here and there, but I don't believe that you have seen any massive cuts as yet.

And *Hansard* can be read, and people can examine it, and I'm prepared to give all this information to all the people in Saskatchewan. We are pleased to show that these services are being provided, so anyone who wants this information can receive it from my office.

I do not see — unless we don't know what's going on or we can't add — I don't see where these massive cuts are in third party groups.

Rehabilitation services, group homes for children — these provide family style homes that provide care, supervision, and training to mentally retarded children. They're located in Saskatoon, Regina, another one in Regina, Prince Albert, North Battleford, and in Shaunavon. And they receive a total of \$546,000.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can see that it costs a lot of money to provide services to people. We are pleased to do this, and this is why, as I indicated earlier, it was necessary to raise taxes, because we have to continue providing these services. I don't know of any alternatives.

The province of Saskatchewan is not allowed to print money; there's a limit to how much we can borrow, so I don't know where the members opposite believe that we could get money with out working. So we have to work, and we have to pay taxes, and we have to help each other and provide these services.

We have group homes. These are straight group homes to provide care to youth in care who cannot be maintained in foster care. there are four fully funded staffed homes, and 10 live-in parent-model homes. And of those, there are a total of 14, which cost \$1.8 million to operate. They have had a reduction of \$7,000 on their contracts on a budget of \$1.8 million. So there is a slight adjustment there.

I could go into the details of which one was reduced. Some were increased, some were reduced, and it's based on anticipated payments from the federal government. So

even that reduction of \$7,000 is really only a paper reduction, because there's a budget reduction. Because in Macnab House in Saskatoon the reduction is based on anticipated payments from the federal government, so they also contract out services.

And in some cases we provide services to treaty Indian people and then are reimbursed from the federal government. Other cases, the services are provided by the federal government. So there is adjustment depending on the balance and the mix of the people in need there. And if there are more treaty Indians, then they get less from the provincial government and more from the federal government. At least, that's theoretically how it works. However, the federal government doesn't always pay their fair share with respect to treaty Indians, and I'm taking that matter up with the federal minister as well.

There's child care centres, two in northern Saskatchewan, at Pinehouse, a child care centre for \$118,000, and the Sandy Bay child care centre for \$116,000. And I think we should look . . . they provide preventative support respite and child care to prevent family breakdown in these communities of Pinehouse and Sandy Bay, for a total cost of \$234,000.

In addition, we have private treatment . . . Now I don't want the members opposite to get up in arms about the word private. The private treatment is a treatment to youth with severe behavioural problems who are referred to private non-profit organizations. Ranch Ehrlo receives on contract from our department a sum depending on the usage that we made of that . . . Between one and a half million and 1.9 million a year to Ranch Ehrlo, depending on the usage. Bosco Homes in Regina receives approximately 832,000 to 865,000, depending on the usage. That is because these are private contracts. This is very expensive treatment, but we feel that it is essential, and are continuing this type of specialized treatment.

There's also the William Roper Hull Centre in Calgary, to which we send individuals. And one of the individuals, I don't want to mention names, one of the individuals is from Moose Jaw, and the member and I worked it out and we are now sending an individual to Calgary for special treatment, and it costs a lot of money and the member and I and the family saw the need and we agreed on it. And I encourage the other members opposite to co-operate where there is need and contact me in cases like that, and we'll try to work out solutions for people and try to help these families. I am pleased to help these people and pleased to help the MLA from Moose Jaw. I won't mention the constituents because we don't want to zero in on the individuals. So I'm grateful for those kind of co-operation . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, it wasn't you, so stop waving your hand.

The alternative measures program is alternate measures to try to keep young people out of courts, and these operate in various communities at a cost of \$446,000, in order to keep young offenders out of the young offenders' facilities.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the House, this Assembly, now has quite a clear picture of how third party grants are spent in this province, the need for the

services. What I've tried to do this evening is to take the political rhetoric out of this and show that this government is doing as much as possible to help people and that there is no need for fearmongering with respect to services. You can see these are a lot of services, and I'm convinced, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that as a government we are doing the right thing.

I want to touch briefly, before I conclude, on another area of my jurisdiction. That is senior citizens. And with respect to the senior citizens, you have to take everything in balance. Senior citizens have been here longer than most of us and are probably wiser than most of us, except maybe one or two senior citizens understand there has to be some balance.

Now with respect to senior citizens, the SIP program — the seniors income program — was increased, and the new budget is, in this budget, \$12.7 million; last year a budget of \$9.3 million. We actually overspent it last year because more seniors qualified. And we made an increase in benefits, and the increase in benefits level over the past while has been up about 30 per cent.

There are now 26,800 senior citizens in Saskatchewan out of 129,000, or one in five, that qualify for senior citizens supplementary pension from the province of Saskatchewan. And that has to, taken in balance with the home program which senior citizens qualify for \$1,500 . . .

And then I heard criticism today that we had cut-off the senior citizen's plan for where they got \$1,000 to fix their house without any matching amount of money. Well, that was a five-year program which had gone through four years and 92 per cent of senior citizens had qualified under that program. And the only senior citizens who would not be able to get that program because of its termination after four years rather than five are those that have turned 65 recently. And we find that most of those senior citizens have made some pension provisions and are not the 26,000 that are on the Saskatchewan income plan.

In addition, these people qualify for the \$1,500 home improvement grant — the SHIP program, the Saskatchewan home plan — and are treated the same as all other citizens. And we do not consider that harsh, taking into account that we have spent on seniors' supplementary pensions an extra 2 to \$3 million. In addition, the senior citizens will receive, under the special program — the seniors heritage program — \$39.5 million, a considerable sum of money for which 76,500 applications were sent out last week, and we anticipate that we will . . . in this budget, we have budgeted \$39.5 million. And I would think that for senior citizens, some may have increased drug costs, others may have decreased drug costs, that \$39.5 million they can use either for their drugs, if necessary, or for their home improvement, or for their taxes. They are free to spend this \$39.5 million as they see fit. I don't see where the members opposite have any reason to complain with respect to the budgeting for senior citizens, which is a substantial sum of money and, as a matter of fact, is a record sum of money. We have covered a situation here

where we have covered senior citizens and the neediest people in Saskatchewan, those people who are served by third parties.

In addition, my department covers many, many areas. We cover day care which we have made an increase of 4 per cent. We cover the Saskatchewan employment development program. This is a program which we operate jointly with the federal government where we try to have people working rather than collecting welfare, and it gives them an opportunity to have a subsidized job. Some of the jobs are full time; some of them are part time, depending on the circumstances and the location. And what we have been able to do there is, we have been able to budget \$13 million, which is money that would have been paid out in any event on welfare payments, and given people a chance to do something to the community service or to learn on the job, and we're quite pleased with how this pilot project is working.

We have examples in Prince Albert, where in your constituency I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have Par Industries, who is training people in forestry, and this is a pilot project. And you and I, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have looked at this project, have tramped around there on the site, and are optimistic that they will get into actual forestry in the Nesbitt forests, and I give you a commitment that we will work in every way possible to have this industry, Par Industries, become an actual lumber company, and we will see what can be done in that regard.

So therefore taking into account the funding for senior citizens, taking into account the funding in social services, taking into account that we are helping people who are needy; that we are cutting government expenditures wherever possible; that we are trying to implement deficiencies; that unfortunately we've had to raise taxes. We have done the right thing. It has not been popular. I can assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has not been easy. It has not been easy. There is a great weight to governing. There is a great responsibility, and all of these decision, whether they involve \$10,000 or \$10 million, were taken very, very seriously. And because we are doing the right thing, I definitely and without doubt am against the amendment. I am for the amendment because it is the right thing to do, and I will be voting in favour.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am convinced; I have been convinced tonight. I have been convinced of something that I have often heard, given my line of work before coming into this House. It has often been said to me that ministers have the ability to put people to sleep. I am convinced tonight after listening to the minister for half hour . . .

An Hon. Member: — No, hour and a half.

Mr. Calvert: — Hour and a half, Mr. Speaker, before I bring some remarks to the budget, I wish to respond to a few remarks made by members opposite in the course of this debate over the past couple of days. In particular, I would like to refer to remarks made by the member for Moosomin. After reading the prepared speech, he made

one or two remarks which I noted with much interest. The member from Moosomin said to us in this House:

... isn't there a possibility that all parties could co-operate in resolving serious challenges?

He said:

I challenge the members opposite that we, as a government, and as representatives of this province, could work together to better the conditions of this province — to better the government of this province.

On that we agree, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

By that, I take it the member from Moosomin means that what's required is a full and free discussion of these serious challenges and the issues that face us. What I take from his remarks is to say that this is the forum where it should be done. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this side of the House we were ready to engage in that debate in February.

(2130)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — But there was no legislature. And we on this side of the House were ready for this debate, full and frank discussion in March, but there was no legislature. We were ready for this debate in April, but there was no legislature. We were ready for it in May; we were ready for it June 1. No legislature.

Mr. Speaker, over the darkest spring in Saskatchewan history, the kind of debate that the member from Moosomin calls for has been denied the people of this province, not by we in opposition, but by the government of which he is a part.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this debate I heard the Minister for Tourism and Small Business turn his attention to the important role of tourism in our province. He spoke of its importance. He spoke of the warm hospitality of Saskatchewan people. And no member in this House will disagree.

But from the perspective of the community I represent, surely I sincerely question the minister's rhetoric. While he waxes on eloquently about tourism in our province, this is the same minister, the same government that proposed to cut all of the provincial government funding to the Saskatchewan air show. Proposed to cut all of this government's funding and support to the Saskatchewan air show. That's a major event in Saskatchewan's summer; it's a major tourist attraction, and I find that a peculiar way to support tourism.

And, Mr. Speaker, while the minister talks about the importance of tourism, another minister in his cabinet and officials in his department are out trying to sell the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park. And they tell us if they can't find a buyer by this fall, they will dispose of all the animals. And animal park without animals — that's a real tourist attraction, a real tourist attraction, Mr. Deputy

Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite say they would like some positive alternatives. I can propose some positive alternatives for tourism. I ask this government to support and enhance the facilities and the events that we have in this province. They want a positive alternative to encourage tourism in this province; then reduce the fees in the provincial parks, make them attractive again. If they want the way to encourage tourists in our province, then restore the roads so that driving in Saskatchewan is a pleasure again and not a challenge.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to turn to some remarks surrounding this budget. Mr. Speaker, in my opinion the people of Saskatchewan don't expect their government to be perfect. They don't expect their governments to go without making mistakes. And they don't expect their governments to have all the answers. But they do expect, and they have the right to expect, honesty. They have the right to expect to be able to trust this government, to be able to trust the men and women they elect. They have the right to expect that commitments made ought to be binding.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — And secondly, Mr. Speaker, they have another right, the right to expect that their government will act in the best interests of all — not just in the interests of a few, and not just in the interests of political expediency, but that their government will act in the best interests of all, and by their actions to give form and substance to the hope and the dreams of all Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on both counts, by this budget, the government has failed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — They have betrayed in this budget both the trust and the dreams of Saskatchewan people.

We haven't had a letter for a few minutes, about an hour . . .

An Hon. Member: — A lot of numbers.

Mr. Calvert: — A lot of numbers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this letter came to the Premier and a variety of us, a variety of members in this House. It is a letter members opposite may want to listen to with some care. It comes from a constituency represented by a member of this government, and the writer places this in the letter:

I feel this is the biggest display of governmental incompetence I have ever seen in my life. Mr. Premier, I feel you have lied about many of your campaign promises. It will be a long time before I will ever be able to vote Progressive Conservative again, because what I have seen here is that a Progressive Conservative vote is a vote for lying, deceit, incompetence, and lack of human

compassion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — The letter concludes:

I really think that it's a shame when the innocent have to pay the price when there are better ways to try and straighten out our economy.

People, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will forgive mistakes; they may even forgive incompetence; but they will not forgive betrayal. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the betrayal that is contained in this budget, the betrayal of promises, the betrayal of trust — has already been clearly identified by our Finance critic and member son this side of the House.

Let me just raise, in my remarks, two examples of this government's betrayal of both the trust of the people of Saskatchewan and commitments made to the people of Saskatchewan, one of those betrayals from a department that I have some particular interest in, the department that is responsible for culture and recreation, and another one that affects very nearly the constituency I represent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I turn up the estimates for the newly-formed Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, I am left with many questions, Mr. Speaker, about these estimates, question about this government's commitment to multiculturalism, this government's commitment to sport and recreation and the arts, and particularly the arts board. And I look forward the time to estimates when we can explore these questions.

But for now I want to look at just one vote from this department, that being the vote for grants under the provincial cultural and recreational facilities program — the provincial cultural and recreational facilities program. Mr. Speaker, this is a good program. It was a good program when we introduced it in the budget of 1982. It was a good program when this government reintroduced it in 1983, albeit with a smaller budget. It's a good program, Mr. Speaker. It provides for R.M.'s and villages and towns and cities across the province. It provides rinks, swimming pools, cultural centres, senior citizens' centres. It's a good program, Mr. Deputy Speaker. While it provides facilities for the long-term, it provides jobs for today. It's a good program. For every dollar that this program has placed in the economy of Saskatchewan, another four has been accompanied locally. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a good program.

I have here the news release of March 30, 1983, when this program was announced. It reads, and here is the commitment:

This program, effective April 1, 1983, to March 31, 1988, will provide \$32 million to assist with the construction, acquisition, or renovation of cultural and recreational facilities in communities across Saskatchewan.

That's the commitment made to this program in 1983 — a five-year commitment for \$32 million.

What that means, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that in this

year's estimates, to fulfill that commitment made to R.M.s and villages and towns and cities across this province, to fulfill that commitment this year's estimate for the program should read \$11 million. It should read \$11 million.

I read the estimates, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . I read the estimates of this department, and somehow I am reminded, I'm reminded of an old song by John Lennon and Paul McCartney — and some members opposite will be young enough to remember this. I'm reminded, Mr. Deputy speaker, of their song, *Maxwell's Silver Hammer*. *Maxwell's Silver Hammer*. Bang, Bang.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what does the estimate read this year when it should read \$11 million? It reads \$2 million — \$2 million. Well, the hammer did come down, Mr. Speaker, and it came down on this program. And what that means, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that every community across Saskatchewan, every R.M., every town, and every city that has not yet accessed, or has not yet fully accessed this program, has been hammered. They have been betrayed.

And I suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that members opposite ought to get to their constituencies and get to their town councils and their mayors and their reeves and tell them the bad news, that the program is gone. They've been betrayed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they've been betrayed by this budget.

I want to turn, Mr. Deputy Speaker, now to a betrayal that's contained in this budget that affects my family, and the constituency I represent, very personally. And I speak of a commitment that was made to the people of Moose Jaw and district that in this fiscal year we would see the beginnings of construction of a new St. Anthony's Home in Moose Jaw to replace the existing level 4 facility.

Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to this House, it was a good commitment. Even though we had hoped and wished and asked for an expanded facility, it was a good commitment.

Over and over again, the commitment was made in our city. It was made by the former minister of Health; it was made by the former members of this legislature for Moose Jaw. Over and over again in the campaign, it was made.

I'm told by members of the St. Anthony's board that the Premier himself made the commitment. Departmental officials, over and over again, assured us that the project would be under way by now. And then on May 21, the betrayal came. We were told the project has been put on hold, perhaps not only for this year, but perhaps for next year, perhaps for the year after that.

The Sisters of Providence, Mr. Deputy Speaker — they match their share of the commitment. The people and the district around Moose Jaw — we matched our share. We raised the 1.1 or \$2 million that we were required to raise. We kept our share of the commitment. The government betrayed us.

This very week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this very week, members of the Royal Canadian Legion in Moose Jaw

instructed their president to write the Premier concerning this betrayal of St. Anthony's Home. This to the Premier from the president of the Royal Canadian Legion in Moose Jaw. He writes:

The Sisters of Providence and the community at large have honoured their commitments, and we cannot be convinced in any way that the leaders of our provincial government will not honour theirs.

We have been betrayed. Like the people in the Sherbrooke nursing home in Saskatoon, like the people of Imperial, we have been betrayed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Moose Jaw and across the province, when we observe that there is money around to hire every defeated PC member who happens to come through the front door looking for a job, when we observe that there is money around to purchase assets in Alberta, when we observe that there is money around to continue funding the labour intensive swimming pools that the Minister of Urban Affairs talked about last night, we ask, why is there no money for a nursing home we so desperately need? Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a betrayal of the worst kind.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — And the news of that betrayal was announced in Moose Jaw when the editor of the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, I think, caught the mood of the Moose Jaw community. And in some ways, the editor has caught the mood of this province. He said in his editorial of May 22, 1987: "A dream has been demolished in Moose Jaw, and the Grant Devine government is the cause of it all."

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Dreams have been destroyed across this province, and the Grant Devine government is the cause of it all.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could not support this budget simply because it is a budget that destroys dreams. This budget has destroyed the dream of a friend of mine who lives in St. Anthony's Home and had hoped to live to see the day when she would be in a new home.

It has destroyed the dreams of young women who wanted to make a career out of treating children in the school system, treating the dental care needs of children in the school system. It has destroyed the dreams of individuals who wanted to give their life as educators in this province. It has destroyed the dreams out of three out of every four students who will apply to a technical school.

(2145)

It takes the further step, the further step in destroying the dreams of the young people who want to begin farming in this province. It has gone a long way to destroy the vision that made this province at one time a pioneer and a leader in health care.

But perhaps worst of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this budget goes a long way to destroy the fundamental principle that

we can trust the people we elect. And that, perhaps, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is worst of all.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand to support the amendment. I could never support this budget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martin: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to join with my colleagues today in support of the budget put forth by the Minister of Finance.

The budget was developed through responsible and sound judgement, through fairness and compassion, sharing, and caring. Sharing and caring, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by a government that believes in consulting with the people, listening to the people, and giving the people the fair and honest answers that they deserve.

With current economic realities that we now face, along with every other country, we must come to terms with the challenges that government faces in providing effective, efficient services to this changing world.

It is our duty as a government to scrutinize all areas of spending to determine where savings can be made, where duplication can be eliminated, and what programs have escalated to the point of being unacceptable in their current state.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, changes are necessary. Change is the essence of progress. We must progress. We must keep up. We must move ahead. And to ignore this fact, as some would do, would be a tragedy for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, some areas of health care were in need of necessary changes. The cost to repair and maintain our health care system has reached the point where it outstrips our ability to provide needed services efficiently and effectively. The magnitude of the annual costs of the Saskatchewan prescription drug plan alone are staggering. Over the past 11 years these costs have risen from 16 million to 83 million; that's an increase of more than 400 per cent. At this rate, Mr. Speaker, the program's cost would rise to 125 million by 1990, 700 per cent more than its initial year.

Obviously this government has faced some difficult decisions — choices that were made in consultation with the people, and the people know we are right. It takes courage to make these tough decisions. Let me assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and let me assure the members opposite that each decision regarding the drug plan has been made with a deep concern to protect those most in need, in a way that will not place them under undue financial stress. This concern, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is foremost in our minds.

Another area of this province's health care in need of serious revision was the Saskatchewan dental plan. Even so, children ages five to 13 will receive free dental care from dentists, from the professionals — the best care possible. And the program continues in total in the North. The government has made difficult decision, but has made decision to protect those most in need.

We, as a government, have to remain able to meet our youth's health needs. Our government chose to re-direct resources to meet head-on the threat of alcohol and drug abuse — the threat, Mr. Speaker, that has been described as the number one problem facing adolescents today. I for one have seen what alcohol and drug abuse can do to teenagers on the sports field, in the class-rooms, in the homes, and on the streets. There's no way that this government or any other fair-minded individual would choose to ignore a program that is threatening our children's future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government devotes one-third of its total budget to health care. It is a priority of the people. It is a priority of this government, and it will be a constant that the people of Saskatchewan can rely on.

Education, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is yet another priority with this province. We, as a government, feel that education is a right rather than a privilege for all Saskatchewan residents. Access to educational opportunities have been developed through this government with the needs of all in mind, to keep pace with the rapidly changing world — access, yes, but with the emphasis on excellence.

Increases in education funding have outpaced inflation since this government has come to office, and that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a record this government is proud of. This government has responded to the province's needs by creating 1,700 more openings for the students in technical institution — 1,700, Mr. Speaker.

This government has increased, by 38 per cent, operating and capital grants to universities. The share of the provincial budget directed to university funding is up by 20 per cent from 1982 to 1986. An interesting comparison, Mr. Speaker, to the previous NDP government's response to university funding: during their last term of office there was a 30 per cent decrease in funding to universities. That's how they respond to the educational future of our children.

In keeping with the subject of students, Mr. Speaker, there are three times more student aid available now than in 1982, three times, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of everything — loans, bursaries, etc. And the people of my constituency, Wascana, tell me that every student should be eligible for student aid.

Mr. Speaker, let me be more specific about education initiatives. We introduced a core curriculum which teachers in my constituency tell me will maintain excellence in education. This new core curriculum will prepare our children for the 21st century and the challenges ahead.

Our government has introduced *Preparing for the Year 2000*, a document that outlines our policy objectives for the future. For instance, opportunities for the young, Mr. Speaker, opportunities for seniors, for women, for natives, for individuals on social assistance, for single parents, for people in all regions of the province. This government will establish a new 3.2 million education outreach fund to provide the resources needed to offer

university and institute courses in smaller centres at regional colleges. The community college will be reconstructed into nine regional colleges, with a new mandate concentrating on skills training and university extension courses.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the University of Saskatchewan has begun to provide the first two years of Arts and Science requirements in Prince Albert, and will soon offer courses in Yorkton and North Battleford through regional colleges.

Now what this means, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that individuals such as women with families, living in smaller cities, will be able to achieve their educational goals closer to home. The expense of their time, travel and, of course, the irreplaceable commitment to their families will not have to be sacrificed. No longer will they have to choose one or the other.

A major problem for women has been the financial difficulty of single mothers who wish to upgrade or continue their education. To assist this group, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government has assured that single parents are now eligible for additional financial assistance under the new special incentive component of student aid.

Also, Mr. Speaker, this government has made a concerted effort to improve educational opportunities for Saskatchewan natives. Funding has been provided to native controlled institutions to set up separate programs. Gabriel Dumont Institute is one example. The Saskatchewan Federated College at the University of Regina, and the Saskatchewan Indian community College are examples of treaty Indian controlled institutions.

The province will propose that there be joint native ownership and management of the new Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology. This province will not be left behind, because to sit back and disregard the changes taking place would be robbing our people of the one thing the pioneers of this province endeavoured so painfully to achieve — to feel the pride in knowing there is no end to what we can accomplish as individuals because the opportunities are there. This government recognizes the value of these opportunities and is committed to helping to ensure all people of Saskatchewan succeed to become the best that they can be.

It is a responsible vision that provides opportunities for self-sufficiency; self-sufficiency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to improve the employment of those such as welfare recipients through enhanced employment in training opportunities. Single parents receiving welfare will be allotted special allowances to cover child care costs and incidental expenses related to their participation in training and employment opportunities. Investment in these families will pay future dividends in terms of both dollars and in quality of life.

Another area this government has focused on through opportunities is women in business. This year, a series of five, one-day conferences for women in business were held in La Ronge, Prince Albert, Yorkton, Estevan, and

Swift Current. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we see more women day after day entering into the work place. Women are pursuing non-traditional professions in trades and are proving to be some of the most successful in business anywhere. It is through education, workshops, seminars, and similar opportunities that we will continue to see the development of equal opportunity for all people in Saskatchewan.

I recently had the opportunity to attend the minister's conference concerning women's issues, and while I believe that day care is by no means solely a women's issue, I'd like to comment on day care. Statistics show that more than half the number of women with pre-school children are now working outside the home. So in reality, Mr. Speaker, the question of day care cannot be ignored. Mr. Speaker, our government has responded to day care in a realistic and positive way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition made reference to what he suggested was an uncaring government to social issues. Mind you, it's not surprising — it's the old NDP tactic, scare and threaten, peddling the politics of fear, but we expect that of them. Let me straighten him out on at least one of many examples, and it relates specifically with the critical issue of day care, how the NDP ignored day care and how the Progressive Conservative government responded to the needs of day care. For instance, the government has increased the number of spaces available in day care centres by nearly 2,000. Now that's performance, that's responding to the needs of the people.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of this province know we care because the evidence is clear — caring and sharing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through the 1970s, those concerned with day care lobbied the previous administration, the NDP, for help. Time and again they asked for help from the NDP but they were ignored by the NDP. They're ignored in day care, as they were in so many other areas of social need. But the Grant Devine government responded. In 1986 the government of Grant Devine introduced operating grants for day-care centres — we responded to their needs. Grants, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to help cover the cost of operating day-care centres. The NDP ignored this critical and important issue. We responded and we delivered.

Mr. Speaker, when one looks back over the history of this province during the years of the NDP government, it is absolutely outstanding to see how the NDP callously ignored the needs of the people of Saskatchewan. Mind you, Mr. Speaker, this is a government, this was a government that stumbled through the 1970s without a clear policy, without a grand plan with which to face the future. And even today, after two rejections by the people of this province, they still don't have a clear policy on anything. Just the same old line, the same repressive NDP dogma that the state knows best.

But it's not surprising, really, because they have a leader who can't decide if he's staying or leaving. A potential leadership candidate from Saskatoon Riverside who can't decide if he wants to go federal or stay provincial. The financial critic from Regina North East who can barely get his foot in the door to have a chance at the leadership.

And a potential leadership candidate from The Battlefords who doesn't believe in free enterprise in a city that is now thriving with new businesses. It's not surprising, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's the same old NDP stuff.

(2200)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. Being near 10 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:01 p.m.