

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Hardy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to introduce to you, and through you to this Legislative Assembly, a group of 34 students from the town of Porcupine Plain and area who are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They're accompanied by their principal, Mr. McMillan; by Mr. Grant Ziola, teacher in charge; and by the bus driver, Al Dewan.

I'd like to welcome the students from Porcupine Plain to our Legislative Assembly. I'm sure they'll find it interesting, and I'm sure they'll learn much about how the operation of this Assembly is. I also wish them a safe journey home. I'd like all the members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming the students from Porcupine Plain to our Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLaren: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed my pleasure this morning to welcome to the Assembly 17 grades 8 and 9 students from Poplar Hill School, Red Lake, Ontario. These students and their chaperons and teachers are in the Speaker's gallery. The teachers are James Byler, Ken Ranck; and chaperons Darla Byler, Kris Wengerd, Janice Hartman, Doris Schantz; and James Byler is the bus driver.

We welcome you to Saskatchewan. We welcome you to the Assembly, and we hope you enjoy the question and answer period that will be following shortly. Have a good time on your visit here in Saskatchewan. I'll be meeting with them, Mr. Speaker, at 11:05 for drinks in room 218. I would ask all members to please welcome these students and guests from Ontario.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to introduce to all the members of this House some special guests and welcome them and ask the members to join me in that welcome. There are seven students here today in the Chamber from the life enrichment program of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council.

The Saskatchewan Abilities Council, I believe, every year takes advantage of the opportunity when the House is sitting to bring some students here, and they are always welcome, and we hope that the experience here is worthwhile and that the visit is enjoyable. It is certainly very great to have them here on a part. They are accompanied by volunteers Lynn Demenle, Louise Billesberger, and Rita McGinn. I ask all members to join me in extending a hearty welcome to this group of people.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me

pleasure to introduce through you, and to members of the Assembly, my cousin, Michelle Hovdestad, who is seated in your gallery. Michelle is down visiting our grandfather who resides here in Regina, and Michelle and her husband, Wayne, reside in Calgary. Please join me in welcoming Michelle to our Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Possible Sale of Sask Minerals

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the minister of privatization, I'll direct my question again to the Premier. Yesterday, Mr. Premier, your minister of privatization and I both attended a meeting in Chaplin, Saskatchewan where, rather than consulting with the people of Chaplin and Fox Valley, your minister simply announced your government's intention to, in the very near future, to sell off the assets of Saskatchewan minerals.

At that meeting your minister of privatization said that: no, he would not consider offering participation to the workers or the employees; no, he couldn't guarantee their jobs; no, he couldn't guarantee that the head office would remain in Chaplin; no, he had no indication of any expansion that would come with the new owner. All he could guarantee the people of Saskatchewan is that a Saskatchewan asset that has contributed well over \$50 million to the province of the people of Saskatchewan is being sold to an out-of-province firm. Mr. Premier, I ask you, how can you describe that as building, diversifying; how do you describe it as public participation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the easiest way to describe it, Mr. Speaker, is the difference, clearly the difference in philosophy. The Leader of the Opposition said in his response to the Speech from the Throne on this issue, he said, we don't need Weyerhaeuser in Saskatchewan. That's what he said. We don't need Weyerhaeuser. We don't need other people investing in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I say this: we do need Weyerhaeuser; we do need people to invest in Saskatchewan, and that's precisely what you have here, is an opportunity for us to receive money by investors. The resource is here; we can manage it; we can tax it; we can take the benefits and create even more, Mr. Speaker, as we've seen with Weyerhaeuser. We know that we can expand in several areas, and the Minister of Public Participation is going to make the appropriate announcement.

See the point is simply this: we welcome people from across Canada to come into Saskatchewan and invest in Saskatchewan. The Leader of the Opposition says we don't need outsiders. We don't need Weyerhaeuser; we don't need other people to invest here. I say, Mr. Speaker, we enjoy inviting people to come into Saskatchewan and build this province. That's why you're over there and we're here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, the last thing that the people of Saskatchewan want to hear is that you've signed another deal like the one you signed with Weyerhaeuser.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — In that regard, Mr. Premier, will you confirm today in this House that any sale of Saskatchewan Minerals' assets will not include any form of loan guarantee or grant from your government to the new purchaser.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, it's just classic that the socialists do not want other people to invest in Saskatchewan, and they are against Weyerhaeuser. We've got a brand-new paper mill; we got 160 new jobs. Mr. Speaker, they don't want to listen to the truth. Would you just listen, please. Come on, co-operate. Mr. Leader of the Opposition get a hold of your people there so we can listen to the response. The response is: when you get \$500 million of outside money coming into the Province of Saskatchewan, you create 160 new jobs and a new fine paper mill to take aspen and poplar, which we didn't use before, design and put it into a paper mill and sell it all over North America, and the opposition and the NDP are against it because it happens to be outside of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it's classic. We encourage people to invest here, the NDP — it's the same old line we've heard for 40 years — they're getting worse; they're not getting better. Talk about being progressive, they're going back and back and back and back. Mr. Speaker, I will announce we are encouraging investment in the province of Saskatchewan to create wealth and prosperity and jobs so the people of this province — and we will continue to do that — including Weyerhaeuser.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary; this is classic. We ask a question; we don't receive an answer.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Premier, once again, is your government providing loan guarantees or grants to the purchaser of Sask. Minerals?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — The minister will be making the appropriate announcement in response to your answer when he is ready to do that and not before. I will just simply make the point: if you want to stand there and say that we should not encourage investment in Saskatchewan, which is your point, I would say I fundamentally disagree with that. I believe we should encourage people to invest here, to create new jobs precisely like we did with Weyerhaeuser. So we take

\$91,000 a day debt and convert it to profit plus new jobs and new technology, and you're against that.

I will visit with people across the province and across the country on the concept of creating new technology and new jobs versus your philosophy of the government. They don't like this, Mr. Speaker. Listen to them; listen to them. What about the concept of Weyerhaeuser; are you still against it? Mr. Speaker, put it on the record, they're still against Weyerhaeuser, and as the Leader of the Opposition said, they don't need Weyerhaeuser in Saskatchewan. I'm glad we're on the side of Weyerhaeuser and he's where he is today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Final supplementary. Mr. Premier, if you want to know the answers to some of your questions, call a by-election in Eastview, call a by-election in Elphinstone and you'll find out soon enough.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is this. Mr. Premier, along with contributing well over \$50 million to the province of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan, Sask Minerals has contributed a great deal in grants in lieu of taxes to the communities of Chaplin and Fox Valley. Can you assure this House that the new company will be paying the same amount of taxes, both provincially and locally, as the publicly owned firm?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentions elections. I'd say the first real test of socialism in a big way is going to be in Manitoba, and the whole country will be able to watch their philosophy of nationalizing companies and watching it go deeper and deeper and deeper into the problems of debt. If he wants a test for a whole bunch of things, just look next door.

Secondly, I will point out that anybody that invests here pays taxes. I wouldn't have had to buy — and everybody knows this — all the potash mines that you people bought, we could have taxed them. But you borrowed money and bought them and put us all in debt and they're not paying, Mr. Speaker. It's a big debt.

We wouldn't have had to borrow money and buy PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company), we could have let it run and taxed it. Money for the people. The whole philosophy of the government borrowing money to buy is gone. It's dead. It's over. It's time you realized, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, that the philosophy of the government borrowing money to buy the resources is over. That was 40 years ago. It might have been good in 1930, 1940. It's old. It's passé. This is 1980. We're going into the '90s and the turn of the century. It's time that you got on board with the rest of the country and the rest of the people in the world.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Dental Services for Gravelbourg

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Health, I direct this question to the Premier.

Mr. Premier, your Minister of Health said yesterday, in this House, during oral questions, and I quote:

... if you were to take the interest in phoning the community or whatever, there is a dentist on his way into Gravelbourg. There will be a program in Gravelbourg.

Yet today's Regina *Leader-Post* says that the head of the dentist's search committee in that town says that no dentist has been located. And CKRM radio quotes the mayor of Gravelbourg as saying he is unaware of such good news. Now, Mr. Premier, can you tell us today whether your minister simply didn't know what was going on or whether he intentionally misled the House?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I want to first of all welcome the member from Rosemont back into the legislature. I thought I heard him whooping there.

I will say, Mr. Speaker, that I believe that the province of Saskatchewan and the people of Gravelbourg will have a new dentist. I hope that it is announced in the near future. I know that there are negotiations going on now in at least one, if not two, different ... in two different processes. And when the minister is prepared to, along with the community, to make the appropriate announcement, then it will be made.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Premier, that answer is totally inadequate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Not only is your government's privatized rural dental plan totally inadequate, but your government doesn't even seem to know what's going on out in rural Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Your minister made statements in the House yesterday ...

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order, please. The hon. member from Regina Lakeview didn't indicate whether her question was a new question or a supplementary, and I'd ask her to do that.

Ms. Simard: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, or a new question now. Your minister made statements in the House yesterday, Mr. Premier, that were in direct contradiction to the facts. Now I want to know whether you're going to speak to him and ask him to start speaking truthfully in this House, or to get his facts straight.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the minister talked yesterday about the negotiations between the community and dentists.

Now the negotiations were going on yesterday and they are still going on today. He thought they might have been announced yesterday. They may ...

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. I can't hear the Premier answering the question. I request some co-operation.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I really do appreciate you having this calming influence on the members opposite because when we do try to respond to a question, they often ... There they go again. See, they just keep wanting to talk.

I would just say again that the minister said yesterday that there are negotiations going on between the community and dentists, and an announcement might be made yesterday, it might be made today, it might be, Mr. Speaker, it might be made tomorrow. All I can say is that I know negotiations are going on, and I suspect that the community will be successful in the near future in having a dentist there for the first time in a very, very long time.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Premier, you're just compounding what happened here yesterday. What we heard from the Minister of Health was that there was a dentist on his way to Gravelbourg, and that is not the case. He also referred to an 87 per cent registration rate, which was a misleading fact, because he knows that doesn't amount to utilization.

Now, Mr. Premier, we're asking you once again: what are you going to do about the fact the minister spoke in this House and either made a mistake or deliberately misled this House?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, let's be careful about the allegations of deliberately misleading anybody. If there is a dentist in Assiniboia that will be sharing time in Gravelbourg, if there's negotiations with a dentist that's about to graduate, I mean it's obviously providing dental services and negotiating dental services with the community of Gravelbourg. Now if there is one on his way and a dentist will be coming then, Mr. Speaker, that's going to be extremely good news for the community.

The members opposite, I would hope, will be very happy with a new dentist in Gravelbourg, and they're going to applaud that and say, very nice, because they haven't had one there for some time.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, because the hon. member raised it, the Minister of Health did not say that 87 per cent registration was 87 per cent utilization. He didn't say that; you did. You have it confused. Let me just point out what the minister said. He said 87 per cent registration means over a course of a year you will have utilization. They don't all go to the dentist in March or in April, and as far as we know, there are 12 months in the year and you want to look at all 12 when it comes to utilization. Rather than confusing the public like you normally do, and particularly the poor, when you go out and try to buy their

votes . . . buy their votes . . .

An Hon. Member: — Say it outside the House.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I will say it outside the House and inside the House, Mr. Speaker. They get a little excited about buying the voters . . .

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

Mr. Goodale: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of dental services in Gravelbourg is a serious issue of great importance to the people in that community, and I would like to treat it seriously.

I wonder if the Premier, given his comments today and given the comments of the Minister of Health yesterday, that the Premier would undertake to consult with the Minister of Health and to report to this House no later than Monday, a definite time frame when the dental service problem in Gravelbourg can expect a solution. It has been lagging on now for many, many months. The community is terribly concerned, and I would ask the Premier to provide a report on Monday about the details of these negotiations and when a solution can be expected.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I will say to the hon. member, it has been months. The whole point of this exercise is that it's been years since they've had appropriate dental services in many communities across Saskatchewan. And it isn't just the children. The entire community — and take Gravelbourg, the community, the seniors, the farmers, the parents — all want access to a dentist. That's the first thing. And that's why we are working so hard to provide dentists in rural Saskatchewan.

The second point is that the minister advised the House, and his staff has advised me, that there are negotiations on at least two fronts right now, and I will report as quickly as I can on any progress of a dentist providing service — a dentist now that's in Assiniboia providing service in the short term, and maybe longer, for the people in Gravelbourg.

And secondly, negotiations between students that are about to graduate and come to rural communities like Assiniboia and Gravelbourg. So those negotiations are going on.

The minister was under the impression that the negotiations would be finished yesterday; if they're not, they're still going on today. then, I mean, we will announce it as soon as we can, and as soon as the community has negotiated with a dentist to come to the community of Gravelbourg.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Speaker, before the dental program was changed last year, Gravelbourg in fact had two forms of dental coverage. They had the school-based plan and they had a downtown dental clinic. And the changes in the program meant that they lost both. As a result of government decisions made last year, they lost both. And the situations, Mr. Premier, is critical in that community because since the changes . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. I believe the hon. member is making a very long preamble to a supplement.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Speaker, I simply want to make the point that last year Gravelbourg had two forms of dental services; now they have none. The situation is urgent. Will the Premier give me the undertaking that he will report on Monday about the state of these negotiations and when Gravelbourg can expect a specific solution?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, what I can give the hon. member the assurance of is that we are working with the community and with the colleges of dental surgeons and graduates and everybody that's involved to provide more and more dentists into rural communities and a dentist into the community of Gravelbourg. And that's what the community wants, is a full-fledged, real live dentist there.

So we are prepared, we are prepared to continue to work, to co-operate with the community to make that happen. And when it does, I'm sure the people of Gravelbourg and the people of that particular constituency that you're somewhat familiar with will be very happy with that.

And to say that both dental services have changed as a result of our program, I'm not sure that that's accurate and that's fair, but we will go back and I'll review that so that I can respond, perhaps at another time.

Application Fee for SIAST Students

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, I took notice on three questions yesterday relative to a \$25 fee at the new Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology. I was asked by the Education critic to confirm the fee; is this over and above the normal tuition costs; and is this fee non-refundable, Mr. Speaker?

First of all I would confirm that there is a \$25 fee. Is this fee a tax or a deterrent fee, I think, as has been used and described by members opposite, Mr. Speaker? The answer there is no. It is a application fee or a processing fee if you like. It's a one-time fee that covers all four campuses of the new institute. It's not meant to create undue hardship or prevent accessibility to that new institute.

For example, Mr. Speaker, and the question is raised relative to the hardship that it might cause to a student of there was a waiting list there, a long waiting list, or that program was full. The example I would give you there, Mr. Speaker, if, for example, a student applied to auto mechanics in Saskatoon and that course was full and then he applied to Kelsey, would he pay the fee twice? The answer is no, Mr. Speaker. It's a one-time fee, and the application is transferred to another program area without cost, if in fact that program is full.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker this was meant to . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order, order, order. Order, please. I think that while ministers certainly have the right to take notice and bring the answer, I believe their answers

should be brief as possible and not unduly take up the time.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — The second question was relative to the impact on the student, Mr. Speaker. What was happening, Mr. Speaker, and this was what was unfair to the students themselves with the old system, we had instances where students might put their names on the waiting list for five or six or eight courses, and in fact it was the same student, but he would show up on several waiting lists. With this one-time fee and the transferability of the application throughout the system, the lists now will more accurately reflect that indeed are the enrolment lists and/or the waiting lists, Mr. Speaker.

The third and final point: is this somehow unique just to the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology? The answer there, Mr. Speaker, is no. The University of Regina has it, the University of Saskatchewan has it, the community college in Lethbridge has it. So it's not unique to Saskatchewan, it's not unique . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, I think you've made . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Lease of Office Space in Regina

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the minister responsible for the property management corporation, I should like to direct a question to the Premier, although I might say it is a painful exercise getting answers to questions. It's kind of like getting your teeth pulled.

Mr. Premier, it has been revealed in the press that the corporation in question has been taking leases on a large amount of new office space in Regina, and I wonder, sir, if you can confirm that the property management corporation has taken out a 10-year lease for 60,000 square feet of office space in the Ramada Renaissance Hotel at a cost of \$12 million, the highest rate for office space in Regina. And can you confirm that this is taking place at a time when your government has a surplus of office space in Regina for which the taxpayers are already being charged?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, here's the same philosophy again. You're against the new trade centre and the hotel in the city of Regina. And if you provide any incentives to have us build there, then it's something that you wouldn't do. I mean, we're building paper mills, we're building bacon plants; you're against building water conservation projects, you're against power projects, you're against building.

I believe that the people of Regina enjoy the new facility, and we can help over time till they fill up that facility — until we have space, accommodate the building of that kind of facility. And we're happy to do that . . . the details of which the minister can respond to because I don't have them with me, but the philosophy of us encouraging people to build, Mr. Speaker, is one that's very clear on

this side. They buy and borrow and buy. We help build, Mr. Speaker, a distinct difference in philosophies, and we're proud of the difference, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure whether he took notice or tried to answer the question for a change.

I just might ask: is adding to the supply of vacant office space in Regina your short-term or your long-term economic development program? Is this what you mean by open for business?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I assume that the Premier took notice and is going to have someone answer the specific questions. And if he is, Mr. Speaker, can he confirm also that the leasing agent in this case who stands to make hundreds of thousands of dollars is one Gavin Koyl of Regina, the same Gavin Koyl who's a close personal friend of the Minister of Finance; the same Gavin Koyl who acted as agent for those who purchased the Cornwall Centre from SaskTel of who the minister was the Minister of Finance; the same Gavin Koyl who leased space to SaskCOMP when he sat on their board of directors; the same Gavin Koyl who seems to pop up in just about every property transaction between your government and developers. Can you confirm those things, Mr. Speaker, or, Mr. Premier?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite and the member from Victoria, Regina Victoria, the Leader of the Opposition, they keep saying how they support small business in Regina and how they support small business all over the province. Mr. Speaker, every time they stand in the legislature, they pick on another business man. They will pick on Gavin Koyl. They will pick on Ron Barber. They will pick on George Hill.

Mr. Speaker: — Order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — They don't like to hear this, Mr. Speaker. They don't like to hear it at all. See, yes, well, just hang, okay. Here we go. Small business, free enterprise, small business in Saskatchewan — you can't find free enterprisers in small businesses that are aligned with the socialist party, okay. They're all Tories. They all support free enterprise, and therefore you name them after name.

Go outside, like the member from Quills said, go outside and tell everybody how awful it is to be free enterprise and private enterprise. Pick on people who are doing business in Regina. Is that your claim to fame? You're from downtown Regina. Don't you have small businesses in Regina Victoria, or is it all poor people, that you can go out there and say, I can do this, I can do this, right? Is that what you do, or do you defend small business? I would say, Mr. Speaker, we are proud of small businesses in the city of Regina. We're going to encourage small business in Regina. We're going to encourage small business all across the piece in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I wish to raise a point of order with you, sir. We have in this House a 25-minute question period, one of the shorter question periods in Canada. It is intended to provide an opportunity for the opposition to ask questions of importance and of interest to the public in this province of Saskatchewan.

When members of the government, ministers, take up that period of time with filibusters and lengthy answers, it destroys the whole purpose and the concept of what the question period is all about. This is what we saw happening here today, I submit to you, sir, in my point of order.

And therefore in light of the fact that, and given the lengthy answers that we have been hearing today and in previous times, I want to ask you to consider the process, to consider what is happening and the kind of answers that we're getting; provide some direction to the House, particularly to the ministers of the Crown; make a ruling and then enforce it so that the purpose of the question and the integrity of the idea of the question period can be maintained.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I have listened to your point of order, and as hon. members know, I have on different occasions asked all hon. members in the House to adhere to a self-disciplined rule where questions and answers will be a reasonable length, and I once more do that. And I am confident and hopeful that all hon. members will try to adhere by this rule without strict enforcement of rules that will say questions will be no longer than X number of seconds and answers no longer than X number of seconds. I simply ask for the co-operation of all hon. members.

MOTIONS

Substitution of Members on Legislative Committees

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I have informed the Government House Leader about what I would request leave of the House to do here. Prior to the orders of the day I request leave of the Assembly to introduce several motions with regard to the membership of the legislative committees, and with the leave of the House I have several of them.

I would so do and I would, Mr. Speaker, ask leave to move:

That the name of Mr. Trew be submitted for that of Mr. Shillington on the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

And this motion would be seconded by the member from Lakeview.

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member for Quill Lakes, I would also move:

That the names of Mr. Brockelbank, Mr. Tchorzewski, and Mr. Van Mulligen be submitted for those of Mr. Kowalsky, Mr. Romanow, and Mr. Shillington on the Standing Committee on Communications.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member for Prince Albert:

That the names of Ms. Atkinson, Mr. Calvert, Mr. Goulet, Mr. Lyons, and Mr. Tchorzewski be submitted for those of Mr. Blakeney, Mr. Brockelbank, Lautermilch, Simard, and Thompson on the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member for Regina Northwest:

That the names of Mr. Koenker and Ms. Smart be submitted for those of Mr. Calvert, Mr. Goulet, and Mr. Koskie on the Standing Committee of Education.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon South:

That the names of Mr. Anguish, Mr. Rolfes, Mr. Van Mulligen and Ms. Simard be substituted for those of Mr. Calvert, Mr. Goulet, and Mr. Koskie and Mr. Lautermilch on the Standing Committee on Estimates.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Athabasca:

That the names of Mr. Anguish, Mr. Tchorzewski and Ms. Simard be substituted for those of Ms. Atkinson, Mr. Hagel and Mr. Koenker on the Standing Committee on Municipal Law.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — With leave, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Moose Jaw North:

That the names of Mr. Brockelbank and Mr. Prebble be substituted for those of Ms. Simard and Mr. Solomon on the Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Nutana:

That the names of Ms. Smart, Mr. Kowalsky and Mr. Goulet be substituted for those of Mr. Anguish, Ms. Atkinson and Mr. Koenker on the Special Regulations Committee.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina Centre:

That the names of Mr. Kowalsky and Mr. Trew be substituted for those of Mr. Koenker and Mr. Thompson on the standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, by leave I move:

That the name of Mr. Tchorzewski be substituted for that of Mr. Romanow on the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina Centre:

That the names of Mr. Anguish and Mr. Prebble be substituted for those of Mr. Tchorzewski and Mr. Lyons on Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, by leave I move:

That the name of Mr. Tchorzewski be substituted for that of Mr. Shillington on the Special Nominating Committee.

Motion agreed to.

(1045)

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Regina Rosemont:

That the names of Ms. Simard and Mr. Tchorzewski be substituted for those of Ms. Smart and Mr. Romanow on the Continuing Select Committee.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Neudorf.

Mr. Gerich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I'm very pleased to be participating in this debate this morning, and I only hope that the members opposite will pay attention long enough to learn a thing or two about what it means, what it means to be committed to the province and to its people. And so to you and my colleagues across the floor, sharpen your pencils and take a few notes.

Mr. Speaker, in His Honour's Speech from the Throne, we heard mention of a difficult economic time that is plaguing the larger portion of our world, and each of us in this province have faced hardships in one area or another because of that.

But this PC government is not content to just sit in the background and wait for things to turn around. We are not content to reminisce about the days when grain prices were high and our resources brought in big money on the world markets. We are not content to do these things, Mr. Speaker, because we have a strong commitment to the people of Saskatchewan.

This government is committed to protecting and improving essential services to the people despite uncertainties and financial pressures on the provincial treasury. If we are successful in providing these services and more, Mr. Speaker, we are, because our Premier and our caucus is in touch with the people of the province.

We listen to the people of Saskatchewan and believe in what the people have to say. You see, we have not lost touch with the people as the NDP have done in their own admission a number of times in the House. This government is a government that consults with the people.

People will tell us how important things are, like trade, are to our survival. They tell us, Mr. Speaker, they want to compete in the United States market without being penalized through taxes and tariffs. And they tell us that their standard of living and their children's future will be more secure as a result of free trade with the United States. Mr. Speaker, they tell us that this province needs free trade.

But do you know what the NDP say, Mr. Speaker? Would you like to tell me what the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Nice Guy, Mr. I'm in touch with Saskatchewan; Mr. Everything that I'm going to do in the years ahead will be geared to the protection, preservation and the survival of the family farm. Would you like to know what he said about free trade, Mr. Speaker? Get your pencils ready, guys.

The Leader of the Opposition, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, said that it's not even a provincial issue. No, he really did. I have a newspaper article right here. It's February 1, '88, page 5, and in it, I quote:

I think this government has become so preoccupied with free trade, which is not even a provincial issue, that it's not minding its business

at home.

Now I think this government has become so occupied with the free trade . . . and he said it's not even a provincial issue. Well I can't believe it. I would like to tell the NDP leader that free trade with the United States is a provincial issue, so the suggestion that we're not minding business at home is not fair, and doesn't hold water. In fact, the statement is so full of holes, Mr. Speaker, that I doubt that if it could even stand the weight of the paper on which the NDP agricultural policy is written. And we all know how heavy that is.

Not a provincial issue. How out of touch can these people be! I wonder if the people in the communities who rely on mining and trading in Saskatchewan potash think it's a provincial issue. I wonder if the Saskatchewan hog producers think free trade with the United States is a provincial issue. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition and . . . what the heck, take your agriculture critic along for the ride, too. I suggest that he go out to the farming communities of this province and ask the grain producers and the livestock producers what they think of free trade, and if it is a provincial issue.

How about the consumers of Saskatchewan. they tell you what a provincial issue free trade is with the United States. They'll tell you they're saving the average of \$300 per person in annual purchase. It is very much a provincial issue.

I could go on and on about the positive effects free trade will produce for our province and our people. But it seems they've worn their pencils down, so we'll leave the members opposite to study their notes until tomorrow, and then we'll see if the NDP and their new leader have learned that free trade with the United States, indeed, is a provincial issue.

I'd like to, at this time, Mr. Speaker, stress the government's commitment to the building and diversifying of our province, and I'd like to cite some specific examples in my constituency, the constituency of Redberry, and what is happening.

We'll go to the northern part of my constituency to a village called Rabbit Lake. It's in the northern centre. The government of Saskatchewan, through the Department of Health, has built a level 3 and level 4 nursing home, and we didn't have a moratorium; we built. This is a commitment to take care of the senior citizens in that district.

Through the Department of Highways and the Minister of highways and my colleague from Melfort, we have built 20 miles on Highway 378 connecting Spiritwood and Rabbit Lake. It's an excellent connecting link between two trading centres.

We move down south towards the hamlet of Mayfair and their district. This is a hard-working, positive-thinking district. They have constructed a new arena, a hockey arena for their children and their hockey teams. It's the centre of activity in the area. They have worked with Sask Housing in putting up a new four-unit enriched housing which was started in September of '86 and completed in

May of '87 — just a real nice unit for the seniors in that area.

Then we go over to Leask, to my home town, Mr. Speaker. The NDP talk of the dismal situation that the province is in. Well they haven't been to Leask. What's happening in Leask? Well, Mr. Speaker the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, for instance, a high through-put elevator holding \$140,000 is remodelling and updating, spending a million dollars to improve their service to the farmers in that area.

This spring a new Pioneer elevator at the cost of a million and a half dollars is going to be built. This is a positive, forward-thinking, future planning. The idea that the Pool and the Pioneer have — they have confidence in the economy of the province and that it's going to improve, and confidence in the farmers of that area.

Highway 40 that passes by Leask on the way to North Battleford from Prince Albert has been repaved with two lifts of pavement, an excellent job done, 15 miles of highway. It was done by Wilson Construction of Buchanan, a private enterprise company.

We move on down to Blaine Lake where I live now in the town of 600 or so people. In the past three years, because of Saskatchewan's positive and aggressive attitudes and thinking that has resulted in this, there has been a new Saskatchewan Wheat Pool elevator built at the cost of over a million dollars, and also a new Cargill elevator built at a cost of over a million dollars.

During the summer, Highway 40 then, from Blaine Lake to Hatford, approximately 25 miles, was repaved by Botkin Construction — an excellent job, quality work, another private enterprise company working for the province and in co-operation with the province of Saskatchewan.

We go down to Borden district and Highway 16. During last month, tenders have been let out for the repaving of six kilometres on Highway 16 just east of Borden. The CNR is presently looking at building a new underpass to address the problem of the old narrow underpass which is unsafe at present, which will likely be rebuilt in the next two years or so.

And we go down to Radisson. There's a positive, hard-working town. Their motto is a town with a future . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . There's a member opposite criticizing me for talking about my riding, and I take offence to that. I'm elected in this legislature to represent my riding, and I'm just passing on to the legislature and my colleagues some of their attitude and their positive-thinking attitude that maybe it would rub off on the opposition, and they should take note with their pencils in writing that down.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gerich: — Town council and the mayor are long-term planners and are worrying about the future development of their town. They have a number of innovative ideas, one being they received a huge sign donated from them from the city of Saskatoon to the town

of Radisson. They've erected it on the north side of Highway 16 just behind the Red Bull Cafe. They're using this sign as in paid advertising putting into a fund. These people are innovative. They're looking after themselves. They're not looking to the government like a lot of these members opposite would like to see. The government purse has got to pay for everything.

These people have taken these funds and have put it into a fund to pay for a new hockey arena, or help towards paying for it — the new sportsplex. This town — the people, the wives, the children, the business people — everyone there is involved in helping build this new complex.

The town council worked with the Minister of Sask Housing just recently to have a 10-room enriched housing complex built. You started in November '86 and it was finished in November '87. We opened it here last fall, and we had 125 people out to it to celebrate in the festivities. Many of the senior citizens in that district are now making use of this facility and making it their new home.

We go down to Maymont just down Highway 16. The mayor and that council, with the support of the district, are adopting new strategies for the future development of their town. They're very positive and a forward-thinking lot. They're looking at new alternatives to enhance their village, and they are at present canvassing their town and district for funds to build a new arena complex.

Now we go to North Battleford. North Battleford is not in my riding; it's the member opposite's, but my riding surrounds the city of North Battleford. Now as much as the member opposite has his doubts about the city of North Battleford and the atmosphere there, the city is a bustling city with lots of activity. There's manufacturing; there's manufacturing of RV's; there's new housing going up; there's metal fabric development going on; there's a Gainer's bacon plant that employs 500 people, most of them living in my riding. My riding of Redberry is benefiting greatly from the economic growth and employment of the city that is provided by the city and its jobs. I would like to thank Mayor Glenn Hornick and the past MLA, Myles Morin, for their work in bringing industry to North Battleford, that in turn brings support to my Redberry constituency.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gerich: — Just north of the city of North Battleford a new cleaning plant has been built. It services an area of 40 to 50 miles in radius. It cleans specialty crops such as rape, peas, and lentils, as well as the cereal grains. It's a great help to the farmers in that area for marketing of their grains.

I hear a few comments coming from the opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I kind of take offence to that. In my speech here I'm talking about my constituency, the people in my constituency and their attitude, because of the attitude that they receive from the provincial government and the leadership in looking after themselves and not being dependent on the government as much as the opposition would like. We know how they

operate. They're even purchasing votes so that they get support, so that they can tell you what to do.

We get into Meota and district, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they've constructed a new hall and a gym — a sportsplex to service the needs of their children and the people in their community. It is a small community that pulls together to get results.

(1100)

We go into the town of Hafford which is the centre of my Redberry constituency. The pioneering attitude of these folks is still astounding; it's positive. They're planning for the future. They never say it can't be done; they're doers. They built a new arena and a hall complex. Everyone in the community is working to finish off the final touches to the Hafford complex so that the town and district of Hafford, on their 75th birthday this July, can have their birthday celebration.

In 1987 and '88 of this year, a remodelling to the Hafford Hospital was done. It was done to the heating system which had, over the years, become worn out. It was a cost of \$99,989, with the government sharing. This is a real commitment to the health care of the district and the people in the area.

Since January, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have travelled in various districts and towns in my constituency and have talked to many of my electorate. I've talked to the farmers. They don't like the loss, the 60 per cent loss in income over the last two years, but they are adjusting. They're adjusting by growing different cash crops. They're diversifying by going into cattle and hogs. They're changing their farming practices to better suit their income needs.

Now in government, the government of today, it has to be changing and adapting to the needs of the electorate with plans to the future and long-term goals. We, the Government of Saskatchewan, under the leadership of the Premier, are doing just that. We've addressed these problems in health care, wage negotiations in the agricultural sector, and we look forward to doing so for the next four years. I therefore support the positive planning and statements of the throne speech and support the motion put forth by the member of Rosthern.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if I might have leave to introduce some students who have entered the Chamber.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much. I wish to introduce 20 adults who are attending the Regina Open Door Society, accompanied by the program co-ordinator, Ali Abdu. They'll be witnessing some of the proceedings here and then I'll be joining them. I ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to the Chamber.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Neudorf.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, on March 21 as I listened to the throne speech, I listened for some indication that the government understood the problems and difficulties facing Saskatchewan people, but I received no such indication. I listened for some indication that the government wanted to deal with the problems of Saskatchewan people, but I received no such indication.

The throne speech, Mr. Speaker, had no specific policies, no commitment to the people of Saskatchewan, and no recognition of the hard work and efforts of Saskatchewan people. It was lacking in content and commitment. It was devoid of vision, Mr. Speaker; meanwhile, the people of Saskatchewan labour under the financial burden imposed on them by this PC government.

The people of Regina Lakeview and the people of Saskatchewan tell me they cannot afford this government's unprecedented tax increases, and they need some relief from the PC government taxation policies. They tell me they don't believe that the PC government should finance its massive \$3.4 billion deficit on their backs.

They believe there are other sources of income for their province, and these sources must be called upon. And let's look at some of these sources: 1.7 billion on oil royalties; 1 billion on the Rafferty-Alameda-Shand boondoggle; 20 million a year to self-serving advertising; 8.4 million a year renting empty office space; 75 million to the PAPCO give-away; 23 million to the Saskoil sell-off; 22 million in gifts to millionaire Peter Pocklington.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that we should look at the truth about PC taxation of ordinary people. In Saskatchewan, we pay the highest income tax in the land, exceeded only by Quebec. And the PC flat tax costs the taxpayer with a net income of \$25,000 a year an additional \$375 per year. There's no indication in the throne speech that there will be relief from that flat tax. There have been utility rate increases averaging 47 per cent from 1981 to 1987. But these, Mr. Speaker, are only the most obvious tax increases, because there are many, many hidden taxes.

Governments, as you know, impose fees and charges for various public services, and a short review has found some 234 individual increases to provincial government fees and licences in the last year alone. These include everything from hunting licences to business name registrations to change of name notices, to technical institute fees, and so on and so on — hundreds and hundreds of hidden taxes, Mr. Speaker.

And if one looks at increases only in utilities, retail sales tax, property tax, the loss of the property improvement grant, prescription drug costs and increases in drivers' licences, vehicle registrations and hunting licences, one finds a total of \$1,424 annually for the average family of four with a \$25,000 annual net income. And this increase has taken place from 1981 to '87.

And all this, Mr. Speaker, from a government which promised, promised the people of Saskatchewan it would cut provincial income tax by 10 per cent. And there's not a word in the throne speech about giving some financial relief to families who are suffering from the burden of PC taxes.

And not only are we shouldering ever-increasing financial burdens and taxation by this government but we are seeing also, a drastic cut in services — less for more, for more money. We see our health care services being slashed, and people are suffering as a result of this. We see changes to the prescription drug plan, where people are having to make a decision between drugs or groceries. We see long hospital waiting lists where people who need urgent surgery are unable to get into the hospital to have their surgery, Mr. Speaker.

But what do we see in the throne speech? We see the government lecturing us about the rising cost of health care. Not a word, Mr. Speaker, about the rising cost of PC political appointments, but many words, many words about the rising cost of health care. The PC government and the PC Party would like Saskatchewan — they would like Saskatchewan to think that quality accessible health care is not possible. They want to pave the way and set the groundwork for privatizing more health care services, as they've already started to do, and they're attempting to exploit the myth of spiralling health care costs. But let's look at the truth in this regard.

Over several years the PC government has shifted many programs and expenditures out of other government departments to the Department of Health. examples include: continuing care expenditures, which used to be funded through Social Services; the minister's salary, which used to be funded through executive Council; and routine support services, which used to be funded through supply and services. These transferred items now amount to more than 240 million per year. They have merely transferred such expenditure items to the Health department and therefore try to claim that health expenditures have increased rapidly. It's another case of PC arithmetic, comparing apples to oranges, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But when we make a straightforward, fair, and accurate comparison, comparing apples to apples, Mr. Speaker, we see the PC assertion is simply not true. In the final three years of the New Democratic administration, health expenditures accounted for 26 per cent of total government expenditures. And in these past three years of PC administration, Mr. Speaker, health expenditures have declined to 25 per cent of total government expenditures. On a straight and fair comparison basis, the PC government is devoting a smaller proportion of total expenditures on total health care, and with manipulation of its books it claimed that its health care budget

introduced in 1987 contained increased spending for health care. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the PC government actually reduced the total spending on health in its last budget, and the 1987-88 health budget shows a reduction of more than 18 million on a straight and fair comparison with the previous year.

The PC government assertions, which we find once again in this throne speech, are not true; they are merely a desperate attempt to justify their betrayal of Saskatchewan health care services. The PC cut-backs in health care have imposed hardship on Saskatchewan families, particularly on those who need medical services and are least able to bear the added financial burden. The cuts to the prescription drug plan have caused severe financial stress to thousands of families and individuals and seniors, and have caused many to make a choice between necessary medication, or groceries. But that doesn't matter to this government, Mr. Speaker. It makes parents dig even deeper to find the extra \$144 per year the average family of four pays because of just this one harmful attack on health care.

And what about people, young or old, who are fighting severe or chronic illness? What about people with rare conditions who need the newest, most expensive drug treatment? Without the drug plan, medication costs for the sick can be astronomical — hundreds and hundreds of dollars per month. But that doesn't matter to this government either. It promised a special policy to assist people with the highest drug bills, but it double-crossed them, and no such policy is in place . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

The PC privatization . . . And the member from Regina Wascana says they delivered. Well the facts show otherwise. The facts show otherwise, I say to the member from Regina Wascana.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And let me tell you the people in your constituency don't agree that you have delivered on your promises. The evidence is clearly against you. The PC privatization of the children's dental plan resulted in the firing of more than 400 dental plan workers and the elimination of 578 school clinics in 338 Saskatchewan communities.

And these cut-backs have been particularly hard on rural families, on the people whom they claim to represent. And they're proud of it, they're proud of it. More than 300 small communities in rural Saskatchewan lost their dental clinics, and they're proud of it, Mr. Speaker. And they lost the jobs connected with them, and they're proud of it, Mr. Speaker. With private dentists concentrated in large centres, rural families have lost access to dental care.

PC underfunding and understaffing have caused a crisis in Saskatchewan hospitals. In Saskatoon alone, waiting lists have climbed to more than 11,000, and even cancer patients have been made to wait five or six weeks for surgery, Mr. Speaker. The PC government made the situation worse by forcing the closure of more than 300 beds last summer at Saskatoon's three major hospitals. PC underfunding has forced hospitals across Saskatchewan

to solicit private donations to purchase necessary equipment.

This PC government no longer helps hospitals with equipment and staffing costs when it contributes capital funds to new hospital construction. What good was the new wing to Pasqua Hospital while it sat empty for months as the hospital sweated to scrounge up enough money to furnish it and hire nurses? And at the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre, Mr. Speaker, it's charitable donations that are furnishing and equipping the children's therapy area. Saskatchewan families know that disabled persons in our province deserve better than that, and Saskatchewan families are angry that the needs of our senior citizens are getting ignored by this PC government.

Our elderly people deserve to be treated with respect and to live in dignity, but instead this government has cut back on special services helping them live in their own homes as long as possible. This PC government has failed to recognize the wisdom and social benefits in helping our seniors live independently, and that's no way to treat the people who built our health care system, Mr. Speaker, no way to treat our seniors.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — In tough economic times it's especially important, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial government set the right priorities and make wise choices. The PC government in Regina has wrong priorities, and it's making unfair choices.

It's chosen to spend more than \$1 billion on the Rafferty dam project in the Premier's constituency. It's chosen to spend more than 20 million per year on advertising, including some special TV specials for political purposes. It's chosen to spend more than \$34,000 a day on empty government office space. And it's provided royalty holidays for big oil companies and expensive sweetheart deals for out-of-province companies like Gainers, Weyerhaeuser, and Manalta coal. The PC government is betraying Saskatchewan health care with its wrong priorities and its wrong choices, and that's a betrayal of Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And now, Mr. Speaker, the PC government is scared for its political hide because they people of Saskatchewan are angry, and they have told them that their wrong priorities are simply not acceptable.

And what is this government's reaction? The government's reaction is to set up a task force that has no power to bring its recommendations before the Legislative Assembly, and for all we know may be composed of PC patronage appointments, because they refuse to tell us who's going to be on this task force — a task force, Mr. Speaker, that may have a very narrow mandate which directs the task force to consider a move towards privatization of health care and deterrent fees.

And this government, Mr. Speaker, has betrayed Saskatchewan people because it has made it perfectly clear that they do not have confidence in the people. They do not have confidence in Saskatchewan people running their own affairs. They would rather bring in large corporations from outside the province to run the business of Saskatchewan rather than to encourage Saskatchewan small business and entrepreneurs to provide the service. It's clear that the PC view of the world is that big business can do it better than the people. That's clear.

And that's a view with which we disagree, Mr. Speaker. We believe in the people of Saskatchewan, and we believe that the people of Saskatchewan individually and co-operatively can build a better and more prosperous Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And for those who may have doubt about the PC intentions to move towards privatization of health care, let me refer you to the Premier's free trade initiatives. The service portion of the free trade agreement which allows for free trade in the service sector specifically states that hospital management and nursing home management is up for free trade. Simply put, Mr. Speaker, that means that private corporations from the United States will be able to come into Saskatchewan and manage our hospitals and manage our nursing homes and demand equal treatments by our government.

In other words, they can demand equal financial support from our government that we pay to our public institutions. And the Premier says, oh, medicare's not in the free trade agreement. Well the word "medicare" may not be in the free trade agreement, Mr. Speaker, but there's no question, when you have private corporations coming into Saskatchewan to manage hospitals and nursing homes, and demanding equal treatment with respect to public funds from the government, that medicare is in the agreement, and to suggest otherwise, Mr. Speaker, is dishonest.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And let's look at the provisions of the free trade agreement that talks about disciplines on monopolies. That provision will require us to consult with Americans before we implement any public program that may interfere with American competing interests.

In other words, if we decide to implement a new dental plan that covers seniors and students and adults other than young children, we will have to consult with the Americans, we will have to compensate any competing interests. American competing interests, that may be affected by Saskatchewan people deciding that they wish to develop a public program to help seniors, adults, and school age children.

This paragraph alone in the free trade agreement, Mr. Speaker, could have the effect of stifling initiative on the part of Saskatchewan people to better our lives and to improve the quality of our lives in Saskatchewan, because when we decide we want to do that, we will

have to consult with the Americans. And that's, Mr. Speaker, the PC vision of Saskatchewan, which is no vision at all, and which is a total lack of confidence in Saskatchewan people.

And we see this lack of vision in their attitude and in their actions in health care. New Democrats, Mr. Speaker, believe in Saskatchewan people. We believe in the ability, in the ingenuity of Saskatchewan people to do things for themselves by using the three engines of prosperity — the private sector, the co-operative movement, and public institutions.

We believe we can build a better tomorrow in Saskatchewan and still be masters in our own land.

Monsieur le Président, je trouve très étrange qu'il n'y a pas un mot dans le discours du trône de la décision de la Cour suprême du Canada sur Mercure et l'intention de ce gouvernement de l'appliquer. La Saskatchewan se vantait d'être la première province anglophone d'avoir ratifié l'accord constitutionnel du Lac Meech. Il est donc inconcevable que la Saskatchewan n'applique pas l'article 110 pour respecter les droits des francophones. Je vous parle comme député d'origine francophone. L'article 110 est un point des droits humains fondamentales comme l'a si bien dit la Cour suprême. C'est donc un sujet qui dépasse la partisanerie de partis politiques. Je demande à tous les partis de supporter la mise en marche de l'article 110 immédiatement.

Monsieur le Président, je veux avancer un amendement à la motion avant nous, secondé par le député de Humboldt, l'amendement lit comme ci:

That the following be added after the word "session" in the last line:

But regrets that the provincial government has betrayed Saskatchewan families by its attacks on medicare, its failure to support Saskatchewan farmers in financial crisis, its unfair tax policies, and its failure to provide jobs and opportunities for Saskatchewan young people.

Merci.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to enter the debate today. I first of all would like to complement my colleague from Rosthern on the fine remarks which he made in replying to the Speech from the Throne. I thought that he very succinctly covered the intent of the throne speech.

As you and I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the particular profession which we belong to, that each year as we roll around to this time of year, we think about the future. We think about concepts, we think about the things that we're going to do to achieve success in the following year. And the things that my colleague from Rosthern talked about in this throne speech, I think, summed up that attitude.

Perhaps it's too bad that those people in Saskatchewan who aren't from the rural areas have lost a little bit of that

hope and inspiration which the spring season brings upon us, because I know that if I didn't approach my particular life-style and my profession in that regard, I would find it very difficult to face the rest of the year if I didn't look with optimism and hope upon spring. What would be the point of me continuing all the endeavours which I do during the year? I mean, every time that I go out to the field, I don't necessarily know that it's going to be a successful year. I don't know, until that crop is in the bin, that the things that I'd planned and dreamed about are going to come to fruition.

And I think that all of us in here, as we make our remarks and talk about our partisan things, should keep that in mind, because what the Speech from the Throne is, is a concept that's been developed over many centuries. It is hopes and dreams; it is ideas that are put forward in a general way — a plan, if you will — and you work on it. And I know it isn't as definite, perhaps, as what I do in my farming operation, and it certainly isn't as definite as some of the members of the opposition would like, but it is a plan.

Prior to us coming back into this legislature, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I took the opportunity to go out around my riding of Thunder Creek and talk to people. I like to go out to the different towns and villages and rent the R.M. office and advertise it and just have folks come in and talk about it. And I particularly like to do it in the spring because it is a rural riding, and people do come in and they talk about their hopes and dreams and aspirations for the coming year. And it doesn't really matter whether they're farmers or the people that live in those towns; they all have ideas and thoughts that they like to express, and I think they like to express them to their MLA.

I was around to places like Chaplin and Central Butte, Pense and Rouleau and Bethune. And that's exactly what we did. They'd bring their concerns in, but mostly we talked about 1988 and the things that they'd like to see and achieve in that particular year. And I think that the throne speech, which was delivered by His Honour last Monday, was a good example of this. He clearly said in there that it's our annual spring awakening. It's a time of commitment, a commitment to our land and to our people. It talked about some of the realities of the world today. It talked about economics. It talked about, I think, some realistic things that we as a people in the province of Saskatchewan can achieve and that we as a government can achieve.

All too often in the past, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people have been led to believe, or people have come to believe themselves — and possibly through us as politicians, and certainly through the media — that maybe we've come to expect too much as a people all the time, and it puts a lot of pressure on us as individuals and also as a society to keep that up. And I think we have a responsibility as elected officials to bring those expectations into a proper perspective; to bring them into line with some of the realities of life. Because if we don't, it's truly a fool's paradise which we would sink into.

(1130)

I want to touch on a number of issues this morning, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, and I won't be getting so much into numbers and details. I think a number of my colleagues have done that more than adequately. They covered off the programs and the expenditures of our Progressive Conservative government, and certainly we've heard a tirade of numbers and facts and statistics from the opposition. And I heard one of the members from the opposition criticizing last night that we don't talk enough about the throne speech and the concepts, so I'm going to try to do that. I don't know if I'll be entirely on the money, but I'm going to take an honest shot at it.

First of all, I'd like to talk about trade. There was a statement made by His Honour that fair trade is essential to the economic well-being of our province, and I haven't heard anybody argue about that. Everyone seems to be unanimous that trade is good for the economic well-being of this province. It seems to be that when we get into method that we run into some problems. And as I've studied and listened to this particular issue over the last year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one point becomes very clear to me — there are no economic reasons to have a trading arrangement with the United States of America. There are political reasons, purely political and philosophical reasons perhaps, to not do that, but straight economics, — none. And we, as we've gone through history of mankind, we've had trading relationships that have occurred over the years and, I mean, we have some examples that are very current, like the economic community, and we've had people joining that thing over a period of time. And definitely there haven't been many economic reasons over there not to keep going ahead, or more people wouldn't keep joining.

And I mean, as far as the social fabric of the countries involved, Greece is one of the last countries that joined that particular association, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and all of us, whether we wanted to or not, have had to take our share of Greek history in school. Some of us found it interesting, others not so much.

An Hon. Member: — Some of us taught it.

Mr. Swenson: — And as my colleague says, some of us taught it. And I don't think the social fabric of Greece has been breaking down particularly bad because they joined the economic community in Europe. And I believe that we as Canadians, in our social fabric, in our wants and needs as Canadians, have established that over the last hundred-and-some years.

And as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what makes a Canadian is a collage of things. I mean, we know about the blood that was shed at Vimy Ridge, about the beaches of Dieppe and about the beaches of Normandy. I mean, Canadians proved that they were Canadians and that they believed in their system of governments in those places, so I don't think there's any doubt in anyone's mind any more what a Canadian is or isn't. So I don't fear for my social fabric because my social fabric in this country will be exactly what I want to make it, what exactly I want to pay for to support it, and it will be as good as I am as a Canadian, as an individual.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — So I want to say that I find it strange that so many people are trying to put fear into this equation about being un-Canadian. To say that a social fabric of a country that is 120-some years old can be rent asunder by a trading arrangement — which simply talks about tariffs; which talks about the proper way to deal with disputes in the court — can be torn asunder; a social fabric can be torn asunder by something that simple.

And I know, as an individual Canadian who is a farmer and a business man and who has personally done business in the United States of America over the last 15 years — I, matter of fact, this very spring, at the end of January, my little two-section farm, which isn't large by standards today, did about \$30,000 worth of business with Americans in Idaho, in Utah, and Nevada, and those are trading relationships and marketing relationships that I've built up over a number of years.

And I can truthfully tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that those people down there, they're good people. They're farmers or business men like me, but they aren't particularly any smarter than I am. They get up in the morning, they put their pants on, they plan their day, and they try and make a living and educate their children and support their community. And the last thing that I would expect from any of those people is to come up here and tear my society asunder. They aren't like that; it would make no sense to them to do that, as it would make no sense for me to go down and plunder the American society as a Canadian. I simply want to continue doing business with them because it is beneficial to both of us.

I can honestly say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from being around my riding — and I admit I don't have a large urban area; I'm in close proximity to one though — but once people understand what that particular document says and what the thrust of it is, there is no fear in the trade arrangement.

Now other people wish to put politics and fear into it, and for that they don't call it what it's supposed to be — they call it the Mulroney-Reagan trade agreement because they want to make a political issue out of it. And that's fair ball; we all do that. That's what this place is about.

But let's not talk economics and economic sense in the social fabric of countries, because it's untrue. Let's talk politics and fair ball. I'll lay my side out, they'll lay their side out, and we'll let the people decide. And I'm sure that the people in Manitoba are going to discuss this issue a lot in the next few days, and they will decide.

And I guess that leads me into another area, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it is so near and dear to myself and to my constituents in Thunder Creek. Once again we go back to the speech delivered by His Honour the other day. It talked about agriculture and the prime importance of it in the economy of Saskatchewan. Certainly in my riding there is no other issue that is so important as agriculture.

Others in my caucus have gone through the list of programs that this government has delivered over the years, and I'm sure that when you put that record up, the last six years against any other six years in this province as

far as this particular department goes, program by program, dollar by dollar, it will stand the test of time.

Even though the members of the opposition may talk about cuts in agriculture, I just ask them to run it through program by program, dollar for dollar, to anything in any previous administration, and if they then can come up with a straight face and say that they done better, I'd sure like to hear about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Agriculture is not something that you quick-fix, it's not something that you stand up and make one speech about and everything comes right. And I think some of the nonsense that we've heard on the production loan program coming from the opposition benches really drives that thought home. Farmers all across this province, farm organizations consulted with this particular government on that issue. And I am just glad, and so are most of my constituents, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the program as it was derived at by this government has stood, and I believe will stand the test of time because it's fair, it's reasonable, and it fits into the life-style of the people who are using it. And be it may that people from other areas like to criticize it, I suggest that they learn a little bit about agriculture.

And that brings me to a little article, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I happened to twig upon a few months ago, and I think it kind of sums up the problem that exists in the benches across the way here about what they think about agriculture and trade and taking risks and a few things. And I'd like to read it into the record. And I must say that as part of my job, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I like to read everything that's available. And whether it's pro or contrary, I think it's important in my job that I read both sides of most arguments. And I normally wouldn't read this particular magazine because I don't put a lot of faith in it, but I was looking at both sides of the trade argument and happened to twig upon this.

And this, believe it or not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is from the *Briarpatch* magazine, and it's the December-January issue of *Briarpatch*. It's an article by one Fred Gudmundson, I believe the author's name is, and I would like to read it into the record because I think it tells a lot about some of the things that I've been saying. And this is headlined "Carrot River, Saskatchewan," and the article was written in the spring of 1969. And it follows as such, it says:

The NDP Opposition (of the day had) decided that it was good politics to mingle with the great unwashed so they started holding caucus meetings all over the province. Today car after car is streaming toward Carrot River. *Star-Phoenix* reporter Jack Fraser . . . (is) in the back seat (of one of the cars). An executive member . . . (is) in the front . . . seat and rookie MLA, Roy Romanow (the present Leader of the Opposition) . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order, please. I would ask the hon. member, I'm sure it's a slip of memory, not to mention sitting members' names either in debate or in quoting.

Mr. Swenson: — My apologies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I

will refrain from that.

Then it happens, a thump, and white feathers billowing all over the place. The car screeches to a halt on the dusty road, one set of farm buildings on either side. The hon. Leader, the now Opposition, leaps out in panic. I've killed a chicken! I've killed a chicken! What will they do to me?

(The former Leader of the Opposition) Mr. Blakeney strolls up from the car behind. patting him on the shoulder, he consoles the then rookie MLA. Don't worry (hon. member from Riversdale) it's just a chicken. Farmers get used to people running over their chickens. They've got lots of them anyway, and if they really cared about chickens, they'd fence them in.

(Mr. Blakeney), I've got to be sure. Shouldn't I tell the farmers? Maybe I better take the chicken's body to him. I can apologize or pay for it or something. Maybe I should dig a grave and bury it.

(Mr. Member from Riversdale), get a hold of yourself, boy. Nothing's going to happen to you. Let's go. We're late. Remember, it's only a chicken.

Mr. Fraser, the *Star-Phoenix* reporter slouched in the back seat mused, "Good boy, Al. Lost one, saved one."

Now some of the things and I . . . the reason this thing twigged me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was because I honestly get that feeling that that attitude is still prevalent from the Leader of the Opposition and some of the people in the benches over there when they talk about trade and when they talk about agriculture. And I mean, these was a grown individual back then and still a grown individual today, and yet I don't see a heck of a lot more sense on these particular issues.

And I would like, instead of a constant stream of criticism, that if they honestly believe in my industry and my constituents, then I would like some concrete proposals on the agricultural situation. And when we talk about trade and agriculture, let's get the politics out of it, get back to the economics and talk about how we do this so we all make a living. And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll believe that since this article was written, that some members in the opposition have actually learned about an area so important to the province of Saskatchewan.

There's one other issue that came up in my riding, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I want to talk about this morning — and I wasn't going to until the member from Moose Jaw South brought it up — and that is about the salt plant at Chaplin. I was out to Chaplin on my office days this spring and was talking about that particular operation, and I think when we talk about public participation in the throne speech, we're arguing and talking about a concept that it is good to have all manner of people coming into our province and investing and doing business, and it's good for all manner of people within our province to participate in the industries and the businesses that are here.

(1145)

And I only mention this because I know full well that one morning the people in Chaplin woke up and they owned the salt plant, or they were told they did. One morning the Government of Saskatchewan told them that they now owned a salt plant. And I don't suppose maybe that was any less surprise or as big a surprise than some of the reaction that the hon. member from Moose Jaw South was talking about yesterday. And I would hope that the employees in that particular enterprise do participate in it, because I think they can do very well, and the town of Chaplin can do very well by participating in that particular enterprise.

But don't let anyone lead you astray, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that perhaps because consultations weren't totally where people would like it, that it is any different than the members opposite when they were in government. And many times as individuals in this province, we woke up one morning and we owned something. Now we didn't have a whole lot of say in it, but we were told that we owned it. Somebody, either in the government benches of the day or in the bureaucracy did the deal on a piece of paper and now we owned it. And there wasn't a lot of consultation anywhere in that particular piece. Now I'm hoping that Chaplin prospers because of this arrangement, whatever it may be, and I am going to work very hard as their MLA to try and see that it prospers. So don't be misled when we talk about public participation and we hear a lot of rhetoric from the members opposite — and we're talking in concepts here — that consultation with people cross this province was a high priority of past NDP governments.

I'd like to talk for a second, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on diversification, because I think His Honour clearly outlined in the Speech from the Throne that our province has been subject to boom and bust cycles ever since entering confederation. And we who are in agriculture only know too well how those cycles can affect the family farm. And when he talked about some of the initiatives that can help make the economy of this province strong enough that we don't have to go through that again, I felt a great deal of pride.

The other day when he talked about irrigation, when he talked about paper manufacturing, when he talked about heavy oil, when he talked about meat processing and production and when he talked about high-tech industry, what he did, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was talk about strengths that are inherent to this province. What he did, he talked about strengths that we have in our educational system. We have the ability to teach our young people, to educate them so that as these things are done and achieved, that they will fit into the matrix of our society and they will be productive people in our society. And Saskatchewan, as a result, will be productive.

And that is the things that we should be talking about in a throne speech, when we're talking about economic diversification, because they are the strengths of our people. They are the things that we want our people to think about, to bring in concepts, to talk about with their MLAs and to have government move into those fields and act upon them. I very much look forward to working

with the member for Maple Creek over the next months in the new area of economic diversification. I think it'll be very exciting for both of us, I know, and it will be, I think, down the road, something that — if nothing else that I do in my time here as an MLA — if I can do some small thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to help take the bumps and grinds out of Saskatchewan's economy, to take the boom and the bust out, I think I will have done what my constituents sent me here to do. And I know not a whole lot about it yet, and I'm planning on learning a whole lot about it in the future, and I think that's something that all the members of the government caucus have dreamed about and will be striving for in the next few months.

I'd like to finish my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by talking about an area that is important to all of us, and I guess I didn't really realize how important until last year — to me. It's something that uses a full third of our budget here in the province, and that is the Department of Health. And I guess I, as an individual, have to say an extreme amount of thanks to the taxpayers and the people who deliver the health care in this province because, probably more than anyone else in this particular Chamber, I probably used more money than any of you here — perhaps all of you put together — in fighting a form of cancer last year.

And I've got to say that, in the hundreds of hours and months that I spent at the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic at the Pasqua Hospital, that I met an awful lot of fine people. The people who delivered the health care to me, as a Saskatchewan citizen there, were top-notch. And I know that because of the particular disease that I had, that I sooner than later may have needed that again. I hope not. And I will tell you as a taxpayer in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and as one who has used the benefits provided to me, that I will do everything in my power as an individual to make sure that that system is every bit as good for the next person that walks through the doors of Allan Blair as it was for me.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — And that brings me to a point that the Lieutenant Governor brought up in the throne speech and which seems to have drawn a fair amount of derision from members opposite, and that is that the Minister of Health will have a task force to look at medicare in its second 25 years in our province.

And even though I met some of the finest people in the health care delivery system in this province at Allan Blair, and as I wandered around that hospital for all those hundreds of hours, no system is absolutely perfect, and many people in that institution and other institutions in this province will say it isn't absolutely perfect. And they will also say it's not necessarily simply adding more money to the system that will make it perfect.

There are an awful lot of people who I talked to in the last year who said they would like the ability to put some input into the health care system. And I had an acquaintance of mine make a statement to me — and this is a person who lives 24 hours a day in the delivery of health care in this province — and we were talking about budgets and my own experiences and that type of thing,

and he said, honestly, I've got to tell you, I think a lot of people in the health care field might vote NDP next time. And I said, why is that? And he said, well, it's this way. They are so scared of this particular issue that they will not attempt to take it on if they are in government. They will simply throw money at it to try and satisfy the wants of the various interest groups within the health care system, because this issue has become something which seems to strangle the NDP Party, and they cannot talk about some of the things that need to be talked about.

And this is an individual who I can remember talking to when the member from Saskatoon South was the minister of Health and, believe me, their former minister of Health. And this individual did not have a high opinion of that particular member at that time. So I just wanted to pass those thoughts on because I believe . . . and I believe the Leader of the Opposition should know this, from sitting on a national task force on health, how beneficial it is for people in those particular areas under discussion to participate.

I mean, for as much as people knock at the fact that five members of this government went around the province last year to 13 meetings and talked to about 4,000 farmers about farm debt, maybe hasn't solved the total problem. And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from being on that particular committee that we didn't solve all the problems, but people sure as heck enjoyed participating in something that dealt with their particular livelihood. And I think it is a tremendous show of courage, a tremendous show of responsibility for the Minister of Health to talk about a task force on medicine and health in our province. And I know I look forward to that task force, and I look forward to people in my community having the opportunity, however he decides, to put input into that task force.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to leave the members of the legislature with a few items here. I think that when we're talking about a Speech from the Throne we're talking about, as I said, it's kind of like spring planting, it's hope, it's new ideas . . .

An Hon. Member: — It's a general direction.

Mr. Swenson: — . . . it's a general direction. And as the Lieutenant Governor read through a list, there was five here that I felt had a lot of relevance to my particular constituency and a lot of people — and I know there was others — but I just want to leave us with five of these that we're going to think about as we go into spring and summer and through the rest of the year.

We talked about improving the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, a tremendously successful plan already, and one that we want to make better for the people of Saskatchewan; improving The Labour Standards Act, particularly as it relates to part-time workers. More and more people are joining the service sector, are in part-time work, and I like to think that it had to be a PC government that brought forward improvements in The Labour Standards Act. You know, traditionally the socialist parties claim these things, but I guess they just couldn't handle it and it's been left up to us. So I'm very proud that that is part of our long-term agenda.

To amend The Occupational Health and Safety Act to provide information on toxic chemicals used in the work place. Once again, it's been left up to a Progressive Conservative government to deal with issues of the work place, and I'm proud of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

To replace The Family Services Act with legislation to improve the role of the family in foster parent situations and to improve the adoption procedure. That is also something, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which we can be very proud of.

And because it affects rural Saskatchewan so much, to provide a new Homesteads Act that recognizes modern day arrangements concerning ownership of marital property.

All, I would say, social issues. All issues that have been derived and driven by this government. And I think that for us that it is something that we need to take to heart as we walk through this session and think about the future and the things that we're going to achieve for our province. So let's not be hidebound by our dogma. Let's rethink what the meaning of spring is, perhaps. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to say that I am proud to support this document. I think it is the way that we in this province should go. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the PC government opposite is not known for telling the truth, but it did acknowledge in the throne speech that:

There is no doubt that the past year has been a difficult one for the people of this province.

I couldn't agree with you more, only I would have put it a great deal more strongly. I would have said that this past year has been a devastating one for the people of this province. It's been a really devastating one.

(1200)

I represent a constituency where over one-third of the people are over the age of 60, and for them this past year has been particularly hard. The PC government has increased utility rates, increased the sales tax, added a flat tax, driven up property taxes, cancelled the property improvement rebates, created increases in hundreds of service fees, and perhaps the worst of all — although on top of everything else sometimes those other things can be very, very difficult — you've increased the cost of prescription drugs for the sick and the elderly.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask the members in this Assembly opposite, how can people on fixed incomes cover all these increased expenses? The reality is that they can't, and that they are slipping further and further into poverty. And that is very, very frightening, very frightening to a group of people who have always prided themselves on being able to manage their own affairs. And for them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those people I represent in Saskatoon Centre, and the seniors across this province, this past year has been horrible. The increase in

financial burden is one reason why it's been horrible.

And then there's been another reason why this has been a horrible and devastating year for Saskatchewan seniors. Not only have they faced a financial crisis, they have also had to watch the government hack and slash at the many valuable social and economic programs which they, the seniors of this province, have worked so hard and so long to establish.

And to add insult to injury, the PC government has even eliminated the senior citizens' own self-help programs, like the Evergreen Neighbourly Services in Saskatoon, which were based on the very values of volunteer service which the PC government says, so very self-righteously, that it supports. Some support, when you pull the funding out from under the senior citizens groups.

The actions of the government opposite have been quite instance, and certainly they have been totally unacceptable and heart-breaking. I say that the caucus opposite has a lot to answer for to the seniors in this province, and I certainly hope in this year ahead that they will be hearing loud and strong from these many deeply frustrated people. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken personally with many seniors about these concerns, and they have asked me to convey them to this Assembly.

So this has been a very difficult past year; we all agree on that. But that's about where it ends because, Mr. Speaker, over the past 18 months that I've been a member of this legislature I have learned that one of the most striking characteristics of the PC government is its uncanny ability to wander away from both the truth and from reality. The government uses language which it hopes will fool people into believing that it is what it is not. It concocts phrases which are deliberately deceptive, and the throne speech is a good example of what I mean.

Take, for instance, the proclamation in the throne speech that these difficult economic times "continue to harass us all." How false, how pretentious that is. How incredible! Can we believe for one moment that George Hill, the former PC Party president, with his \$150,000 salary plus benefits from SaskPower is harassed by economic difficulties? Or Paul Schoenhals, whom the taxpayers of Saskatoon Sutherland defeated and who now earns over \$80,000 at their expense. Or, for that matter, Jack Sandberg, whom I defeated and who is now managing customer relations at SaskPower for an undisclosed salary. You won't say what his salary is, so I'm sure it's quite high; he's being paid by the people of this province to justify to them why their power bill should be increased.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — And it's going on and on. This is scandalous patronage in the past year — just cosy cushions of comfort for the PCs. And I say, shame on all of you opposite for supporting statements that declare that.

And I'm going to quote again from the throne speech: "... the turmoil of transition has created hardship for each and every one of us." And I say to you that you know nothing about hardship, nothing at all, and that you have no right

to pretend that you are among those whom your policies have so grievously hurt.

But it's obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the PC government can't face the truth of the effects of its policy. You can't face the shame, you can't face the guilt, you can't face the people, so you're blaming all our problems on the world economy. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that they can't have it both ways.

You, the PCs opposite, are the ones who love to rub people's noses in the idea that you can't have rights without responsibilities. So I say to you, be responsible.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — You are the government. Have the guts to face the fact that you have the power to help people. You have the right to help people and you have the responsibility to help people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: All the people. So do it. Ah, but you say, we are doing it, we're doing it through public participation. "My government," you say in the throne speech, and I'm going to quote again: "... believes that all people in Saskatchewan have a right to the opportunity of participating in the province's economic growth."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I almost choked when I heard that sentence, because it illustrates for me so perfectly one of the fundamental differences between the ideology of free enterprise Conservatives and democratic socialists. It illustrates so clearly just how little you value the people of this province, and I say it's another example of PC deception.

Now very simply put, Mr. Speaker, who do they, the PC government, think creates the province's economic growth in the first place? It's the people, that's who.

We already participate — and I want to underline that strongly. Without our work here in this province there wouldn't be any economic growth. But the PC government whole-heartedly embraces a narrow, right-wing ideology which totally fails to value the contribution of every person in this province who participates in the economic growth, whether that person is a home-maker, a waitress working on minimum wage, a nurse, a miner, a farmer, and thousands and thousands more. That's the public participation and the economic growth of this province, and that's what we represent here on this side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — And I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to look at what's happened with the Saskatchewan Minerals plant in Chaplin. And I ask you what kind of public participation is it when the minister of privatization only speaks to the employees to tell them that the plant has been sold to a Toronto owner. The minister believes in public participation so much he won't even go on an open line show to speak with the people.

Mr. Speaker, this PC government has demonstrated over and over again that it only listens to the owners of large corporations and their PC friends who dance to "Yankee Doodle Dandy," and everyone else in the province is fair game for manipulation and deceit.

And the PC government will sell or give away the very precious heritage of this fine province, a heritage which rightly belongs to us all, to all the generations of people, of the people who have put their energies and work into building up all the industries and services and farms of Saskatchewan — the ordinary people; the people who work for wages; the people who work on the small farms; the people who have owned the mom and pop small businesses here in Saskatchewan. But the PC's want to siphon off all their wealth, all our wealth, siphon it off to put more money in the pockets of those who already have far too much financial control.

And I ask why, Mr. Speaker, why can't they value people's labour? Why can't they support Saskatchewan's own ways of developing a vibrant community! And why can't they treat ordinary people with the dignity and the respect that they deserve? They can't do it, Mr. Speaker. They can't do it. The corporations fund their political party, and we all know that he who pays the piper calls the tunes. They must all do as they are told, and to help them do this, Mr. Speaker, they've swallowed hook, line, and sinker a free-market, dog-eat-dog ideology to which they seem to be very slavishly attached.

And others before me have spoken at length on this point, so I won't. But their allegiance to the dog-eat-dog ideology explains why I laughed when I heard in the throne speech that they were going to deal with dangerous dogs. For one wonderful moment I fantasised that they might be going to control themselves. But there's no such luck, which is too bad for the people of Saskatchewan, because their blind, unreasoned allegiance to one narrow ideology spells deep trouble.

Now we see this already, Mr. Speaker, in their attempts to diversify the economy. In the throne speech they tell us that economic diversification will "combat the boom and bust cycle," but they fail to acknowledge that an uncontrolled free market economic system creates these boom and bust cycles, and they will never be able to develop plans for combating this until they come to terms with the cause.

That's one reason why, even though we have economic diversification through our high-tech industry, we see SED Systems laying off people and we see Develcon faltering. Two of our major high-tech firms are in deep trouble, and I have little confidence that the PC government will rescue them over the long term, and especially with the former minister of Consumer Affairs now in charge of SEDCO. Since she failed to protect the 6,700 depositors in First Investors and Associated Investors, I worry about the kinds of deals she may be considering in her new portfolio.

(1215)

And last but by no means least, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about health care. The nature of the task force

announced in the throne speech remains a matter of grave concern. My colleagues have already spoken about this in detail. I just want to record here my outrage when I heard that the PC government now wants to use the taxpayers' money to study the future of medicare after spending all last year introducing changes which destroyed the concept. If you thought health care system needed changes, why didn't you study it before you attacked it so viciously.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that nothing that the PC government does makes sense. They seem to believe in government by chaos. They seem to be lurching towards the dark ages making proclamations of no substance which you expect us to believe with blind faith.

As I listened to the throne speech, I had a vivid sense of déjà vu when I heard that the government intends to draft a blueprint for health care into the year 2000. The words had such an awful familiar ring to them. We've heard that phrase over and over and over, ad nauseam, particularly in connection with education. Now we have it with health.

So I looked up the report Preparing for the Year 2000: Adult Education in Saskatchewan, and I was glad that I did because I think it may shed some light on what we can expect in health care. As you know, we new Democrats are concerned that the task force may be used to move our health care system into medicare premiums, deterrent fees, and cuts in services, and to provide the environment where extra services for those who are wealthy may well be introduced.

The PC government denies this, but look at what's happened in adult education. In Saskatoon, for example, is now bursting with enterprises offering adult education to those who will pay. The fees are often high, the staff sometimes poorly paid, the standards questionable, and the end result sometimes deeply frustrating for those who spent their savings hoping to find employment or to get upgrading. And government loans and grants are often supporting these businesses, yet there's no mention of them in the report, Preparing for the Year 2000. They are not even party of any PC blueprint. They are there because the government sees nothing wrong with the proliferation of such agencies any more than it sees anything wrong with encouraging a two-tier health care system.

So we can be sure that the blueprint for health care will not probably openly announce the destruction of our public health care system any more than the education report announced the undermining of our publicly-funded adult education system. What will happen will be indirect and more insidious.

So I say, beware of a government which tells us in the throne speech that its primary goal over the next decade will be to ensure effective and relevant delivery of health care. Remember that this is the same government which has already destroyed the popular school-based dental plan, dismantled the prescription drug plan, refused to fund senior citizen groups focusing on preventive care, created long hospital waiting lists, cut back home care, and the list goes on and on and on.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that this is a government which is not to be trusted, this is a government which is not to be believed, and this is a government which is not to be sanctioned. From the PCs we get the platitudes of the throne speech, and the realities of their actions. While they say that they remain committed and remain optimistic that farmers and common sense will see us through, they are practising the politics of greed, the politics of fear, and the politics of hatred.

They have turned Saskatchewan into a "hustle heaven." There's a few winners and a great many losers. There are privileges for those who are already privileged, and there are penalties for the poor. The PC government has destroyed the programs designed to help people across this province and left them cowed. They've intimidated working people, and they have failed dismally to support women and children. They have viciously maligned our aboriginal people and other minority groups, and they have pitted groups of ordinary people against each other in an ongoing campaign to make us hate each other.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has set our younger generation an awful example of leadership — incompetence, dishonesty, and totally lacking any sense of justice or compassion. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that we have truly fallen upon tragic times in this province. It will take the strength of all of us who are genuinely committed to fairness and common sense to see us through.

We must together honour the work of our seniors who created our history and who truly built this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — They built this province. And we must together work for a future which is not based on the backward, narrow, right-wing ideology of this present government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in saying that there is no way I can support this vacuous throne speech any more than I can ever support the actions of this present government. I vote against the throne speech, but I vote in favour of our amendment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In entering the debate on the throne speech, I'd first like to congratulate the mover of the throne speech and the seconder of the throne speech, the member from Rosthern and the member from Moosomin, on a job well done.

I'm going to start off with . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. I ask the hon. members to allow the member for Saltcoats to make his remarks to the Assembly. I'm sure we're all having difficulty hearing him.

Mr. Johnson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They're elated over there for some reason, but I don't know why.

First of all, I think that Saskatchewan stands on the edge of a new frontier. We really do. The frontier of economic

opportunities and strong and vibrant — that's good for the province. The Saskatchewan of 1988 will be a celebration of progress and achievement. That's what the Speech from the Throne represents, and that's what the Progressive Conservative government is all about.

I'm especially pleased to rise in the legislature today to speak in support of the Speech from the Throne, and obviously they'll ask why. Because I have confidence in this government and its leader, that's why. The Premier of our province — probably the best thing that's happened to Saskatchewan in the last 20 or 30 or 40 years.

I have confidence in the dynamic programs that the government have laid out for agriculture, education, and health care, and certainly economic affairs. The people of my constituency elected me to this legislature because they have confidence in what I stand for and what this government stands for. They also have confidence in the Saskatchewan future. Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne spells out the future direction of the province. All the opposition has to do is just go over it point by point and they will understand what the direction is and what the agenda is.

Of course health care got top billing in the throne speech, and rightfully so. I hear about underfunded health from the opposition benches and, as you remember, there's 63 per cent more funding in the health care system today than there was a few years ago.

The major task force on health care is going to supply a blueprint to us, an agenda to follow into the '90s. And that announcement is very, very important. As you all know, Saskatchewan spends one-third, and I won't elaborate on that, but they do, one-third of the entire budget on health care, but it bears repeating in this Assembly. And all I've heard from the opposition is: you throw more money at the problem; that's going to fix it.

Well I think it's near time that we took, and high time that we let the people out in rural Saskatchewan and throughout the province come before the task force and try and help us find out how we're going to address the health care system in the next 10 or 20 years, because obviously the costs are rising every day and there's new diseases that will come into health that will have to be addressed, and I think it's only proper that we do have a blueprint that will tell us the direction of health care in this province.

You know, there's many things in there besides health. I want to touch on a few, such as agriculture. I would like to take some time to discuss agriculture and what it means to our province. The many programs that we've brought in since 1982 in agriculture — the PLP, which is production loan; counselling assistance for farmers; Farm Land Security Act; federal debt review board. I could go on at length because there's many, many programs, but my colleagues have pretty well covered it in throne speech debate, and we will hear more of it in the days to come.

One sentence in the throne speech says something that the government has recognized for very . . . I suppose ever since we got here in 1982 — agriculture is the backbone

of Saskatchewan; there is no doubt about it.

That's why since 1982 this government has introduced many protections and protectionist programs for the farmers. I don't believe in protectionism really, but under normal . . . and certainly not under normal conditions, but these aren't normal conditions. In times of economic adversity for the farmers of the province, we've come to realize that government will always help the farm community, and we've demonstrated that year after year since I got here in 1982. We have helped and we will help, and they can say anything they want from the opposition side, that the farmers don't agree or disagree with what we're doing. It may not be everything they want, Mr. Speaker, but it's a whole lot better than 22 per cent interest.

This session of the legislature will bring in a farm protection law and we will bring it in, in this session. Legislation to protect the rural family in tough times will be introduced. I guess, Mr. Speaker, the opposition is haunted by the fact that in two provincial elections, 1982 and 1986, the farmers of the province — rural Saskatchewan — rejected them totally. Why? Simply because of a couple of things. State ownership, that's all they can think of — state ownership. Land bank . . .

An Hon. Member: — Control, control, control.

Mr. Johnson: — Control our lives. Land bank, and total disregard for farmers, total disregard for the rural way of life.

The NDP has no respect. They have no regard for farming and the farmers out there know that. We've heard them complain and harp and bellyache and shout and scream about how tough it is out in agriculture and rural Saskatchewan. Well they're right on that point. The trouble is they're not listening to what the people are saying out there. I haven't heard one solution since 1982 to anything that I have addressed up to now come from that side of the House.

(1230)

The debate on the Speech from the Throne gives the people of Saskatchewan an opportunity to see clearly the difference between that side of the government and our side of the government. There's a reason why the opposition sits there. For 10 long years they promoted state ownership, state control — almighty socialism.

The dignity of the individual was replaced by the power of big government. The man who sits here today as Leader of the Opposition is the key figure in that past 10 years of the family of Crown corporations and land bank and secular socialism. I believe the motto of socialism is: let me take you by the hand from the cradle to the grave. You'll never want, but if you start off that way you'll stay poor, and they'll make sure you stay that way. They carry you on from, like I say, from the cradle to the grave — stay under the wing of socialism and they'll look after you. You can go across the pond and find that they've lived with that thought for years and years and years and just see how depressed the people are there. And of course if you're really poor, they'll buy you a membership to let

you know that they'll look after you, and they will keep you — take you from the cradle to the grave.

The member from Riversdale better know that it takes more than a cowboy hat and a pair of cowboy boots to represent the farmers of this province, and you can remember back into the . . . when he was running around the country doing that.

They've got no new ideas at all. They cling to the old ideas. I hear them talking, way back in Anderson days and 30 years ago and 20 years ago, and I don't know when they're going to get the visionary thought to look to the future and forget about the past. You can't really do a whole lot about that now anyhow.

Their response to the throne speech shows that they're not in touch at all with rural Saskatchewan. Main Street, Saskatchewan, coffee row. No wonder the NDP candidate from Elphinstone has dropped out of the race. I take my hat off to those that done that. I think they're withdrawing from that race on principles alone — certainly in buying memberships just to belong to a party. I mean, giving it to them for a present, buying votes — the party of Allan Blakeney obviously have taken the position that they'll go to any length to seize power.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the Assembly, you have a Premier who has shown leadership that people in Saskatchewan can trust. He's made it possible for us to stay in our province and keep them on the road to prosperity and economic achievement. Our Premier believes, as was stated in the Speech from the Throne, that we need the building blocks that are going to form the next 10, 20 years in this province.

The importance of the family was stated in the throne speech. As a government, we believe that there's no institution out there that's more important than the family. As a result of our commitment to the family, more Saskatchewan families are prospering today. Education, health care, agriculture — all the programs are geared up to help the family. We will uphold that solid family values in our policies.

I want to make a point here, Mr. Speaker. The opposition don't like to talk about traditional values and the family. It makes them uncomfortable, simply because it doesn't fit their agenda. Mr. Speaker, the family of Crown corporations and the family of big government is the only family that they really feel comfortable with. We, on this side of the House, we just love to work with the families who work, and work hard, to build a better Saskatchewan.

I not, with some interest in the debate that I've heard up to now in the last few days, their continual gloom and doom. Every one of the speeches that come from that side of the House — I haven't seen one ray of light; it's all doom and gloom, the underdog, the ordinary people. I'm really, you know, frankly sick and tired of the gloom and doom aspect. They're scare tactics. I mean, they're scare tactics even to the people of the mine of Chaplin that was took over yesterday.

An Hon. Member: — No solutions, no options, no new

ideas.

Mr. Johnson: — No solutions, no new ideas. Negative, negative, negative.

Let me take the time, Mr. Speaker, and talk about Canada-United States free trade. Saskatchewan is a trading province and we all know that. Our economy is dependent on trade, and we all know that too. And yet we have the Leader of the Opposition comfortably in bed with John Turner and Ed Broadbent in tearing up the agreement. I mean they've publicly stated that all over Canada: if we're elected we will tear the thing up. Well that's silly. I say shame on the leader. To him Oshawa and Bob White are more important than any jobs in Saskatchewan.

And I suppose they're comfortable in bed with the NDP and the Liberals, they always have been. But I can't understand why a leader of the province of Saskatchewan, or an opposition leader, that's hoping some day that he might get in, will protect eastern Canada. Lord knows, we've protected them for a lot of years.

The Premier of our province on this side of the House has certainly shown leadership in free trade. He knows that free trade presents a great opportunity to the people of Saskatchewan to prosper in the future and I proudly join him on supporting that free trade.

Now, I just want to take a moment or two on talking about the family. The throne speech makes mention of the fact that The Family Services Act will be replaced by legislation to improve the role of the family in the foster parent situation, and to simplify the adoption procedures. I commend the government for encouraging the adoption of children. Children are precious and they must be helped to have homes in this province. The government has shown care and compassion in recognizing the special needs of children.

Mr. Speaker, the role of education in this province also is recognized in the throne speech, education of our young people that will help build the future of this province. Good schools simply build a better society. Without a doubt the government will continue to build their education corner-stones in the province of Saskatchewan.

On a note that happened in Saltcoats constituency, my constituency that I represent, the good news is that we have our shoemaking training school back, training the children, training the students — I shouldn't say children — training the adults and we're cranking out adults into the work-force that are going to go to work in the shoemaking training and trade of Saskatchewan.

I wish to raise another matter, Mr. Speaker, the matter of vital importance not only to Saskatchewan but all of Canada, and I speak now of the protection of the unborn. The Premier of this province and the government caucus has shown a strong commitment to the sanctity of life.

We have called for a national law to be passed in the Parliament of Canada to protect the unborn, and I'm

proud of our commitment to the dignity of life. And at this time, I call on the members of the Opposition to state their support for the rights of the unborn. Stand up in this Assembly and tell the folks exactly where you stand. The Saskatchewan families and the people of Saskatchewan believe in values such as the protection of the unborn and so does the Progressive Conservative caucus and our Premier.

This debate on the throne speech presents us with many opportunities to show the people of Saskatchewan where and what the government stands for. My question is again: what does the Opposition stand for? What do you really stand for?

Before I get to the end of my time, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to relate a few things out of my constituency, if I may.

Going right back, related to health care, the constituency of Saltcoats finally got badly needed health care beds in the Saltcoats constituency after eleven years of the former government — badly needed home care beds. We finally got 30 brand-new beds in Saltcoats, proudly named Lakeside Manor because it's right beside the lake on the Yellowhead Highway at Saltcoats; and 20 new beds, ten in each care homes; additions to the Langenburg and Esterhazy care home structure — beds were badly needed . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the NDP had a moratorium certainly on that Saltcoats one because it was debated in this House when the member that's trying to get into Elphinstone was the minister of Health, I believe, and it was turned down for some silly reason because they thought they should plunk all the care beds into the big centres. This government took the decentralizing concept and we are now building badly needed care home beds out in the country where they belong, where they're close to their families and their grandchildren and that's just the compassion of this government.

Of course we got new highways built in my constituency that were very badly needed, and I'd like to quote from the little paper, *The Four-Town Journal*, that's out in Langenburg. The local paper said, and while I have just wrote it down here, I can get the quote. The editor says that:

Walter Johnson, MLA, since he has got the post as the Saltcoat's representative has accomplished more in the past few years as the former member had in the 11 or 12 years (whenever) he was here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Our Progressive Conservative government, Mr. Speaker, believes in free trade, a strong economy, good education, a real good education system, a first-class health care system, and the family. And that pretty well sums up this side of the House. Those are Saskatchewan values. Those are values that brought me to this legislature, because people in my constituency voted for those kind of values.

The throne speech shows that we are on the right

direction and on the right course, and we'll stay on that course. Common sense will prevail. We have chosen to build an economy to support farmers and strengthen our education and health system, and I really believe that's what Saskatchewan people want. That's what the Speech from the Throne presents to this legislator — positive programs for the province.

Mr. Speaker, during this session of the legislature, it'll become more obvious that the Progressive Conservative government are in tune with the people of Saskatchewan. We listen to people, their hopes and their goals, and that's stated in the throne speech.

On behalf the constituency . . . my people in my constituency, Mr. Speaker I am absolutely very, very pleased to support the throne speech. And again I congratulate the Premier for his strong leadership, and I wish to go on record supporting the throne speech.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to open my remarks in this throne speech debate this afternoon by repeating something that you said earlier this week, and that is to extend thanks to the CFB (Canadian Forces Base) band from Moose Jaw, the band from Canadian Forces Base, Moose Jaw that accompanied the opening of this session.

An Hon. Member: — They're all my friends.

(1245)

Mr. Calvert: — The Deputy Premier just indicated that they're all his friends. Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the Deputy Premier that as I greeted some of the members of the band, it was suggested to me, by members of the band, that when the government members opposite were filing into this Chamber, they were going to play, "Send in the Clowns."

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — They want to know where you stand on the casino.

Mr. Calvert: — And, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well now the Minister of Finance is speaking from his seat.

Mr. Speaker, I also had it observed — while we're discussing the CFB band and other Moose Jaw issues here — I also had it observed by a number of those who were here as guests that the best thing they heard last Monday, in the afternoon, was the music of that band, and they didn't hear much from this government that they liked.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: Mr. Speaker, the time in this debate is precious and I do not intend to waste time, nor do I intend to participate in the kind of debate that we've heard so much from members opposite. I do not intend to use this precious time in personal attack on others members. I mean, this place is too important for that, indeed life is too

important for that, and I'll have no part of it.

Mr. Speaker, given that the time is limited, I want to restrict my remarks, not to the whole waterfront of issues that arise out of this throne speech, but to some specifics.

One, Mr. Speaker, a very specific lacking in this throne speech. And then I, too, wish to address some issues in regard to the Saskatchewan family. And then if I have time, I'd like to make just a general comment about the state of our province as I see it today.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the environment, in terms of this favoured land which is ours to inhabit and to be stewards of, in terms of the nature that surrounds us and sustains us, I frankly was shocked, Mr. Speaker, when I heard the throne speech and found not one, not one substantial reference to the environment — not one.

Mr. Speaker, very significant environmental issues are facing this province today, and will face this province into the future, and that this government should totally ignore them is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker — it's unacceptable.

This very week, Mr. Speaker, the University of Saskatchewan announced, had a forum in Saskatoon with the people of Saskatoon to discuss their plans for a hazardous waste disposal facility, an incinerator as I understand it. The University of Saskatchewan is forced into doing this because there does not exist in this province a facility to deal with hazardous wastes. And that's a shame, Mr. Speaker. It's something that I expected to see addressed in this throne speech. It wasn't there.

Mr. Speaker, we recently heard reports of dioxin contaminations in the North Saskatchewan River. This government says it's going to monitor the situation. They're going to monitor the situation, but we've got no commitment from this government that they're out to discover the source, no commitment that they wish to prevent further poisoning of the North Saskatchewan. It's just so typical, Mr. Speaker. They monitor, they watch, they task force until the problem is a crisis, and then they fumble around trying to find a solution.

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech provided a golden opportunity to deal with some of these issues. And this week, Mr. Speaker, the minister of privatization who sometimes doubles as the Minister of the Liquor Board, the minister who doesn't want to go on open line talk shows in the morning — this week the minister was announcing around the province that soon we're to have sales of canned beer in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, to be fair, a great many Saskatchewan people are in support of that proposal. They might have sooner had a tax cut, but they've got canned beer. But, Mr. Speaker, what no one in Saskatchewan is in favour of is finding beer cans on our beaches, beer cans in our back alleys, beer cans in our ditches.

This government has announced perhaps as early as May we're going to be able to buy beer in cans, but no plan is in place, no plan is in place for the deposit or the return or the recycling of these cans. Mr. Speaker, a golden opportunity existed in this throne speech. I expected it to be there. Not a word, not a word about recycling, not a

word about these aluminium cans.

There's just a litany of environmental concerns that I feel should have been in this throne speech. Let me just identify one more which I feel is perhaps the most significant environmental concern facing our province this year, this spring and summer, and perhaps well into this year, this spring and summer, and perhaps well into the future. And, Mr. Speaker, I saw evidence of that concern just yesterday as I drove west of the city of Moose Jaw along the No. 1 Highway and saw clouds of blowing dust, Mr. Speaker, clouds of blowing dust.

Mr. Speaker, there's a problem out there. The land is dry. The largest body of water in southern Saskatchewan is gone — Old Wives Lake is gone. It's a salt flat. The people in Limerick are telling us that already they're concerned about their supply of drinking, the supply of the water they use for drinking. I talked to two farmers from the Carievale district. They were at the banquet following the opening. And they tell me, Mr. Speaker, that if they don't get moisture very soon, there just won't be a crop around Carievale.

Mr. Speaker, we've got a problem out there. It's not even mentioned in the throne speech — no plan, no contingency, nothing about what may well be the most serious environmental problem facing us this year, and perhaps well into the future — a throne speech with nothing. Now I'm not about to accuse the Premier, the Minister of agriculture, of not being aware of this problem. Just yesterday he spoke to a group in Moose Jaw at the Moose Jaw spring farm show and he concluded his remarks with these words. He said to the folks there:

I wish you the best for '88-89, and between you, me and the good Lord, I hope it rains this spring.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as much as I believe in the power of prayer, I think we need something else from our Premier than hopes and prayers that we can get through this spring and summer — concrete action.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to turn, for a few moments, to an area of provincial life that does receive attention in this throne speech, that being the area of family life. And I'm personally glad this government did see fit to include family life within its throne speech, and no one will disagree — no one in this House is going to disagree with the fundamental assertion that appears in the throne speech, that the family is the fundamental unit of our society; no one is going to disagree with that.

In recent days, and we heard it again today, this government has taken upon itself the mantle of the protector of Saskatchewan families. Mr. Speaker, in my mind that is a noble aspiration — noble aspiration. In the Speech from the Throne we heard the phrase that government programs will be modified to meet the changing needs of the Saskatchewan family. And, Mr. Speaker, again I respect that commitment, and I sincerely hope that some of their policies will be modified to meet the needs of Saskatchewan families.

But I guess where we disagree, Mr. Speaker, is in terms of those needs. What are the real needs of Saskatchewan families today? You see, Mr. Speaker, for instance, I

happen to believe that family life is enhanced when families can be, and spend time, together. I believe that's good for family life. I believe that when kids are out of school there ought to be an opportunity for their parents to be with them. What that means, Mr. Speaker, what that means is that we need in this province a common day of rest.

Now in this very same throne speech, in the very same section under "The Family," this government announces its intentions not to deal with the store hours question, not to seek a common day of rest in Saskatchewan, not to provide time for families to be together. They've just washed their hands of it. They said, we've got neither the backbone nor the ability to deal with that question. Mr. Speaker, I do not find in that a commitment to Saskatchewan families nor to family life. Families need time together.

In my experience, Mr. Speaker, in working with families in crisis, that experience has shown me that very often the family crisis, where families are breaking apart, where alcohol is involved, where gambling is involved — very often, Mr. Speaker, that crisis arises out of a financial concern and out of concern for financial security.

It's just understandable, Mr. Speaker. You would recognize the strain that's on a family on the farm with a heavy, heavy debt load. You know what kind of stress that must bring. I know from my own family experience what it's like for a family farm, for the two parents to have to work off-farm, two other jobs to support that farm. You know what kind of stress that's going to put on a family. You know what kind of stress that's . . . You know what kind of time that's going to limit for the family to be together.

Across this province, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency and across this province, working families are seeing their hours cut back. Everybody's becoming a part-time employee. I mean, you can't pay a mortgage, you can't raise a family on part-time wages. This government itself has frozen the wages of working families and, in some cases, the wages have been rolled back, and Canada Packers in Moose Jaw is a good example of that.

These families have kids who need clothes. They have mortgages. They have car payments. And the financial question becomes stress on the family. And in that kind of situation, what is this government doing? What is this government doing?

Well it's reaching deeper and deeper and deeper into the pocketbooks, the purses, the wallets and the bank accounts of Saskatchewan families. Reaching deeper and deeper. Higher and higher taxes. Higher and higher licence fees. Higher and higher utilities, leaving less and less and less for Saskatchewan families.

And when they're cutting things, when they're cutting their own expenditures, where do they cut? They cut family services. They cut grants to groups, non-governmental agencies out there really trying to work and help families. They cut things like the dental plan. They cut the prescription drug plan.

Mr. Speaker, just this week at my office arrived two boxfuls of this document, two boxfuls. It's a glossy, 50-page booklet printed and paid for by this government extolling the virtues of free trade. I didn't ask for them. Two boxfuls just arrived . . .

An Hon. Member: — By the taxpayers, paid for by the taxpayers.

Mr. Calvert: — Paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this money could have been used, this expenditure could have been used, to help Saskatchewan families. If they would have just forgotten the idea, they could have cut the taxes on Saskatchewan families. No, they cut programs, but they won't cut their self-serving propaganda and advertising, and that's a shame, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: Mr. Speaker, let me move along, given the time, to make just a couple of remarks about the situation as I see it in Saskatchewan today. Mr. Speaker, when I look at Saskatchewan today and the situation that exists and is growing, a situation that is due to both the neglect and the intention of this government, I'm reminded of some very old words, and you might remember these from your days in school. Let me quote:

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom; it was the age of foolishness. It was the spring of hope; it was the winter of despair. We had everything before us; we had nothing before us.

Mr. Speaker, Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* — and when those words were penned a century ago or more, Charles Dickens couldn't have known how appropriate they would be to Saskatchewan in 1988. Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that that is becoming more and more the reality in Saskatchewan.

We are becoming more and more a tale of two cities, one city reserved for the few, the privileged, another city which is reserved for the many who daily are finding life more difficult. We do have everything before us. We have a land of wealth, we have a land that should offer opportunity for every Saskatchewan person, for every Saskatchewan young person. We have a land of great wealth. We have everything before us. But what do we have?

In government, a group of men and women who are bent and determined to sell off, to sell out, to give away this great land. And soon we will have nothing before us, Mr. Speaker, soon we will have nothing before us. People are saying to me all the time, what's going to be left when this government's gone?

(1300)

Mr. Speaker, it takes years to build. It takes years to create. It takes generations to widen the gap between the rich and the poor. It takes years of labour to build even a modicum of social justice. Mr. Speaker, it only takes but moments, it only takes but the stroke of a pen to destroy and to tear

down. And that's what this government is bent on doing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, that agenda is foreign to the people of Saskatchewan. We built this province by working together, by sharing in good times and in bad times. We built this province, and now it's all being torn apart by this government.

We are becoming a province divided, a province of two cities, and it's happening both by the design and the neglect of this group of men and women.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. It being 1 o'clock, this House now stands adjourned until Monday at 2 o'clock p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:01 p.m.