

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the legislature, some 60 students seated in your gallery, sir, 60 students from the Weyburn Junior High School in Weyburn from Grade 8. They make it an annual part of the school program there, Mr. Speaker, to bring these students to the legislature for a day, and I commend the teachers and the students for that initiative.

Today along with the students we have Mr. Nedelcov and Mr. Liddle as teachers, along with bus drivers, Roy Loos and Wayne Vilcu. As well, there's one exchange student, Ann Mylin, as I understand it, from Denmark, who is here with the students, Mr. Speaker. I'll be meeting with them after question period for some pictures and some refreshments and a chance to answer some of their questions.

I hope you have enjoyed your tour. I look forward to meeting with you after. I wish you a safe trip home, given the way the day is out there, and I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join with me in welcoming these young people from Weyburn Junior High, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLaren: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 14 students from Quebec who are here on a curling, I presume, a curling competition, and I want to wish you all welcome to Saskatchewan. I'm sorry, I don't know much French other than bonjour, and we hope you have a very good stay in Saskatchewan and in Regina, and good luck in your curling. They are here, along with Marcel Léveillé, and I would ask all members of the Assembly to please welcome these students from Quebec.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLaren: — They're over in the other gallery there, Mr. Speaker.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Sale of SPC Building in Moose Jaw

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Mr. Minister, will you confirm that Saskatchewan Power has sold the SaskPower building in Moose Jaw to a local firm for \$280,000, and entered into an agreement to lease back half of that building from that same firm for \$37,000 a year, plus half the total operating costs of the building for 10 years?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I will confirm that the building in Moose Jaw has been sold. I don't have at my fingertips the numbers. I will confirm as well that the Sask Power Corporation has a leaseback arrangement for almost 50 per cent of the total space, and there is some agreement, as well, as it relates to operating costs. I will take notice of the question and provide the answer in some detail, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hagel: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, let me give you some help with the numbers. In a letter received last Friday and dated today from you, you say that SaskPower is renting half the building back for \$37,000, plus half the total operating cost. In Friday's *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, SPC spokesperson Bob Rempel says it costs SaskPower \$65,000 a year to operating the whole building. He also says that the operating cost part of the lease is now \$16,000.

Now, Mr. Minister, you know that these figures don't jibe, but no matter which ones you use, SaskPower has either gone from \$65,000 a year for a whole building to \$69,500 for half of it; or from \$32,000 a year for a whole building to \$53,000 for half of it. Either way, Mr. Minister, you're now paying more to rent half a building than you used to pay to operate a whole one, and I ask you, Mr. Minister, will you tell power users in Saskatchewan how this latest example of privatization is in the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, if he's standing there with a letter in his hand that I've signed setting out those numbers, why is he asking the question? It seems to me rather stupid if he . . . if I have to . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — We could meet behind the rail a little later and I'll read the letter to you.

Mr. Speaker, the sale of the building in Moose Jaw and the leaseback of 50 per cent of the space, I don't know why we want to have a building that we only need half of, Mr. Speaker. It was driven, Mr. Speaker, as a cost-cutting measure. Later today, Mr. Speaker, I might talk a little bit about that when I table the annual report for SaskPower for this year.

Mr. Hagel: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I would assume that you would read your letters before you sign them, and this is a forum for answering questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Let me understand this, Mr. Minister. You sell an asset for \$280,000 and then your rent it back for either 530,000 . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order, please. Order, please. The hon. member realizes that a supplementary does not allow for a long preamble and it certainly seems to me that you're getting into one right off the bat. So

please get to your question with just a very few remarks prior to the question.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, straight to the question. Mr. Minister, will you tell this House whether or not the sale of this building was tendered, and will you lay on the Table all tenders you've received and prove to the people of Saskatchewan that you got the best deal you could swing?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I'm very confident, Mr. Speaker, that we got the best deal. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I did say in response to the first question that I would take notice of the question and provide the member some detail.

Mr. Hagel: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — Final supplementary.

Mr. Hagel: — Final supplementary. With this example of management, is it any doubt that we have the kind of deficit in the province of Saskatchewan that faces us today?

Mr. Minister, could you tell this House whether your government intends to do the people of Saskatchewan any more favours like this in the near future? Is the SaskTel building in Moose Jaw up for sale? Are SaskPower buildings around the province up for sale; and is it your intention, Mr. Minister, to enter into the same kind of give-away deal when you sell off those buildings that belong to the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — We're looking for a buyer for the Sturdy Stone Building. We're looking for a buyer for — what's that one in Prince Albert?

An Hon. Member: McIntosh . . .

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — McIntosh Mall, whatever. Where it is to the advantage, Mr. Speaker, of the corporation and the people of Saskatchewan, where cost savings in the long haul can be demonstrated, Mr. Speaker, we will take a look at what opportunity exists for disposal.

Sale of Sask Minerals

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister of privatization. Mr. Minister, you announced this morning your government's plans to sell the sodium sulphate division of Sask Minerals to an Ontario firm, Kam-Kotia Mines, and the peat moss division to a Quebec firm, Premier Canadian Enterprises Ltd. Can you tell this House today if these two sales were tendered, and will you table the tenders in this House?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well, Mr. Speaker, that's correct that one part of Sask Minerals, the Chaplin mine, as well as the Fox Valley and the other two mines that were shut down have been sold to Kam-Kotia minerals, a company headquartered in Ontario that has put in \$12.5 million

into the project here in Saskatchewan, as well as the sale of Premier peat. And I'll have more to say on this in more detail, Mr. Speaker, in a ministerial statement following question period.

However the question of the member opposite was: were there tenders and would I table the tenders. No, there were not tenders. There were a number of companies that the Crown Management Board had looked at, different options, weighed carefully, and the two that we felt that were in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan, the future diversification and development of this province, were the two in which we entered in negotiations that resulted in the final sale.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you tell us there were not tenders. That tells me you pick and choose your friends in the purchase of Saskatchewan assets. Mr. Minister, we are very anxious to see the details of this deal.

I'm going to ask you: will you table the deal because we want to know if your friends in eastern Canada have paid cash, or is there some kind of a long-term payment arrangement? We want to know if you have guaranteed any loans to these firms, and we want to know, Mr. Minister, what about the long-term debt of Sask Minerals? Is this being taken over by Kam-Kotia, or will Saskatchewan taxpayers be left?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well certainly, Mr. Speaker, there are no loans or anything of that nature. We feel that these are the deals that are in the best interest, as I said previously, for the development and the diversification of this province. I have more to add in a few moments about this type of diversification and value added activity.

Certainly there were no loans, and as to aspects of the deal, I will be tabling in this House what is normal to table. I do not have that prepared for today, but as soon as possible I will have it prepared.

Mr. Calvert: — Further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, are you aware that Kam-Kotia's parent company, Dickenson Mines, has had a history in our province. I understand that Dickenson Mines opened a uranium mine in the 1950s; it was closed by 1961. I understand they reopened that mine in the 1970s; it closed shortly after. Given this company's track record in our province, how can you assure Saskatchewan people of those jobs?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Certainly, Mr. Speaker, when you see a company coming and buying an asset for \$12.5 million, I don't think they spend the money just to lose it. They see an opportunity in this province, as do I and many others in this province, Mr. Speaker.

So certainly if you want to look at Dickenson Mines — and I was just looking at their prospectus there the other

day; holdings across Ontario and in the United States and in British Columbia and now in Saskatchewan — and I'm proud to welcome those kind of corporate citizens to this province. I think it shows some faith in this province, shows faith in the diversification and the future of this province, and they're glad to come here when they won't have a chance to be taken over by people like those opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, new question. Mr. Minister of privatization, Regina *Leader-Post* business editor Bruce Johnstone writes this, and I quote:

Whether you agree with privatization or not, most people would agree there's a right way and a wrong way to privatize a Crown corporation or government service.

If you took a poll in Saskatchewan today, my guess is that most people would say the Progressive Conservatives are doing it the wrong way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — That's the press, Mr. Minister, and I couldn't agree more.

Can you tell this House why, Mr. Minister, Saskatchewan taxpayers should be happy with a deal which nets this province less than \$16 million, well less of the book value of these companies, while selling off a Saskatchewan corporation that has yearly, year after year, shown a profit and returned profits and dividends to this province of well over \$50 million? Why should Saskatchewan people be happy with this deal?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well certainly, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people will see that there is value added activity, diversification, bringing in a corporate company that is interested in other types of mineral development within this province. I think that in itself is an indication that there was the possibility for growth and expansion.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talks about a return on investment. And then if you want to look at . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — If you want to look at return on investment, it's the same sort of thing that the members opposite had when they had PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company), the same thing with Sask Minerals. There was never any interest charged — interest-free loans, things of this nature.

I think if you take those away from the net earnings over the period of time that Sask Minerals has been in place, divide that by the number of years, you will see a return on investment of about \$800,000. I can take the money that was invested today and put it in the bank and get better interest rate, year after year return on their investment and their government passion at owning and

taking over things.

Mr. Speaker, we will see a new . . . (inaudible) . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. I think you made your point.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Status of Jobs at Carrot River Saw Mill

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. New question to the minister of privatization. I see that part of your deal with Premier Cdn calls for the closure of the Carrot River saw mill, throwing some 50 people out of work. For that, your government, Mr. Minister, will receive \$50,000 — \$50,000 in exchange for 50 jobs. Mr. Minister, do you feel that that is a good deal for the citizens of Carrot River, and also do you feel that that is a good deal for the citizens of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — With due respect to the member opposite, his facts are wrong. There is no planned closure, and one knows that the supply of wood in the Carrot River area is certainly not there for ever. It's limited in the soft woods, and there may well be . . . there can be changes in technology to use hardwoods more so than soft, which can give further life to the saw mill at Carrot River.

I don't know those types of things, but I do know this, that in the peat moss there is an opportunity for expansion; there is more peat moss that can be used. We've brought in a company that has 50 per cent of the market in North America and the potential to gain a lot more — value added, diversification, research with the University of Saskatchewan which I'll be glad to explain following this question period.

And I believe those are the things that are of interest in Carrot River, and I believe the people in Carrot River will be able to get added jobs as this resource and this development takes place.

Mr. Thompson: — New question Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you indicate that I do not have my facts, and I want to quote and by way of information, Mr. Speaker, and in the background information:

Premier will also purchase Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation lands near the plant for \$50,000. The company will provide a transferable lease to lease land back to Saskatchewan Forest Products to allow orderly shut-down of the Carrot River saw mill operations.

Now, Mr. Minister, that is in black and white, and I want to ask you again: do you consider this a good deal for the citizens of Carrot River and Saskatchewan? And did you consult, Mr. Minister, with the workers of the Saskatchewan Forest Products mill in Carrot River?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Simply put, yes, I feel this is a good deal. If you look at the land transaction, it is that there is

some trade in the amount of land there to locate the new peat moss facility on and a leaseback for the saw mill and, as you know, the building of the new planer. So I believe it is a good deal, and yes, I did go to Carrot River. I was there on Thursday. I talked to the people in the town. I talked to the workers there, and I believe it is a good deal, and I believe when you can see value added — maybe you're against this. It seems that he is against any kind of diversification, any type of new product that can be brought on-line. I'm not opposed to that, and we on this side of the house stand for that, and I can see that there will be diversification, new products and new companies that will come into Carrot River, and I think that will augur well for that town, as well as the rest of the province.

Compliance with Court Order re Rafferty-Alameda Project

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the minister responsible for Saskatchewan Water Corporation. Mr. Minister, you will be aware that on Friday the courts of this province made an unprecedented ruling when it came to developing a true public participation in the affairs of government. I am referring, of course, to the order of the court to open the books of the Saskatchewan Water Corporation, against your wishes and against the wishes of your closed, secretive government.

Mr. Minister, my question is to you, is this: will you promise to provide full and complete compliance with the court order and open the books on the Rafferty-Alameda project to all citizens who want to be able to check the files?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member makes a few allegations that I don't think were fact.

To begin with, the court did not order Saskatchewan Water Corporation to open its books to everybody for every piece of paper that they have; rather, what the court indicated was that the information needed to certify the operation of the development of the Rafferty project should be made available.

That was offered to the people prior to the matter even going to the courts. The people in Sask Water have been offering that kind of information right from day one, when the first request came. They will continue to offer that kind of information, and it will be open to the public, whoever needs the information, but you can't simply go to a corporation and say, we want to go in and go through all of your files. No, that doesn't happen, but if they would be specific and say what they would like to have, that will be made available.

Mr. Lyons: — Supplementary, Mr. Premier. I was listening to the minister — it's now the people's fault, it's the people's fault that we have a closed and secretive government.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, in the spirit of the ruling of the courts which have been made, will you let all the people of the province know, through tabling the

documents in this House, to provide us with a complete, the complete set of files on the economic analysis underlying the Rafferty-Alameda project: Will you let all the people of the province know by tabling it here in this House?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, the question that the member asks is almost laughable. If I were to bring that amount of paper to this House, it would be most awkward to find a place to put it. There's an awful lot of information been gathered over many, many years dealings with the Rafferty and Alameda project. When you come to the information that he's requesting about the financial operation and the financial need of the project, that would more properly be asked of the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation.

Mr. Lyons: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister this: he says there's a lot of information, and he's correct, and every piece of independent information and every independent study has shown that this is nothing more than a political boondoggle, that they don't have an economic analysis.

I ask the minister, Mr. Speaker, this: if you have that economic analysis, will you once again table it before the members of this House? Let us look, if you have that analysis. I say you don't. Prove it to us by tabling it here today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, the environmental impact assessments that were done have been made available to the public. There's been a very major public review of the whole project, and the member is quite capable of waking across from his office to the Legislative Library where most of that information is filed, and he could have a look at it there.

Mr. Lyons: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've spent the last eight months of my life reading that. That's something obviously the minister and his officials haven't done. What I want to know, Mr. Speaker, is this: in the light of the fact that every — every — independent study of this project which has been done says that it makes no economic sense and it makes no environmental sense, and in light of the fact that the courts have ruled that we open the books, will the minister, until the international joint commission has studied this project, put a moratorium on the construction of the coffer dams which are the first step in the construction of this boondoggle? I ask you, Mr. Minister, put a moratorium on if you can prove in fact that this project will stand by itself.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — I guess the simple answer to the question would simply be no.

Funding for the University of Saskatchewan

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the

Minister of Education. It has to do with the underfunding to the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, your underfunding and the underfunding of your government to the University of Saskatchewan, and under your guardianship, has led down to a breakdown of negotiations for the first time ever in the university's history, and this is putting the education of this year's students at risk. People in Saskatoon and 16,000 students at the university and people across the province are asking what you are going to do about it, Mr. Minister. What have you got to tell them?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — First of all, Mr. Speaker, in response to the first part of the member's question relative to funding, I think it's useful to point out that between . . . since this administration formed government in 1982 and this very day, our commitment to university education has been clear in every which way. And I would remind the hon. member that the increase in operating and capital funding to our universities, we have increased by a greater percentage than any other province in western Canada, Mr. Speaker, in the last six years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, the issue that the students at the University of Saskatchewan are facing this very day isn't an argument that simply revolves around the debate over government funding levels; it's not even an argument that revolves simply around the right to strike or not, Mr. Speaker.

What is at issue here is the fact that some students are being used as pawns and as bargaining chips in the dispute between two parties, Mr. Speaker, and I take a very, very dim view of that.

These students are heading into the last two weeks of their classes. They're embarking on . . . after that, and to their exam schedule; it's a very high-stress, emotional time for them, Mr. Speaker, and it's very unfortunate that they are being used as pawns in this dispute.

In so far as what we can do, knowing full well, Mr. Speaker, that the university has a board of governors, it has some autonomy, and that this is an issue between the faculties and, as well, the university board of governors' administration. But having said all that, I, as Minister of Education, because I have the students' interests at heart, am not about to stand by and be a disinterested spectator, Mr. Speaker.

Over the weekend, I have talked with all three parties. I have talked to Professor Millard on behalf of the faculty association . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. The minister's question is getting quite lengthy, and I certainly want to allow him to answer fully, but give him a few more seconds.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — I have talked to all three parties, Mr. Speaker: Professor Millard, on behalf of the faculty association, the president, members of the board of governors; and, as well, the president of the students' union. We will monitor very closely, Mr. Speaker, the

situation. The university has announced a contingency plan and, as well, there has been a call on behalf of the administration for a third party intervention. And I am led to believe at this very moment that that has been accepted.

I'm hopeful that that can bring some results . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order. Next question.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, the minister acknowledges that he has a responsibility to the students; and I would like to remind him that his responsibility shouldn't have just started at this moment. There was a first time in history that we've had a quota on university student entrance to the College of Arts last year.

The problem is that there is underfunding because there's been a 50 per . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Now the hon. member is getting into a long preamble to the supplementary. Please get to your supplementary.

Mr. Kowalsky: — I would ask the Minister whether he would think it advisable at this time to let the university administration know what they can expect in the budget so that they can proceed with negotiations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, I already outlined in some detail what our commitment has been to universities over the past five or six years. I think you'll see that commitment continued in this next budget. If that somehow was going to have made a difference, it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the strike mandate would not have been utilized — such was not the case.

Mr. Speaker, clearly my interests lie with the students. I am not going to see their educational lives or their careers jeopardized. We will watch this extremely closely to see: (a) how the contingency plan works; and (b) if in fact third-party intervention could help, Mr. Speaker. We are not going to be a disinterested observer.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Sale of Saskatchewan Minerals Corporation

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today and announce to my legislative colleagues and the people of Saskatchewan, the sale of the two Saskatchewan mineral's corporation to two vibrant, well-established Canadian companies.

The sodium sulphate division, with its operating mines at Chaplin and Fox Valley, and the two closed mines at Mossbank and Gladmar, is being sold to Kam-Kotia Mines, an associated company of Dickenson Mines Limited of Toronto for \$12.5 million cash.

Following my consultation with the employees at

Chaplin last week, I am pleased to report that employees of the sodium sulphate division will be offered continuing employment with Kam-Kotia. Wages and union contracts will also remain secure.

As well, Mr. Speaker, Kam-Kotia will offer a profit-sharing plan to employees, allowing them to share directly in the growth of the company and the minerals industry. Mr. Speaker, that is giving employees a stake in their own operation, and that is public participation.

In coming to Saskatchewan, Kam-Kotia will explore new investment opportunities in sodium sulphate operations in the province. Mr. Speaker, this investment will lead to further economic and employment opportunities for Saskatchewan people.

I'm also pleased to announce, Mr. Speaker, that Premier Sask Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Premier Canadian Enterprises Ltd. of Quebec, has purchased the peat moss division, with operations in Carrot River, for \$3.4 million cash. Following my consultations with the employees in Carrot River, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report that all employees will be offered employment with the new company. As well, wages and a union contract will remain secure.

In coming to Saskatchewan, Carrot River will be Premier's head office for their western Canadian operations. As well, Mr. Speaker, Premier Sask Inc. has immediate plans to launch the first in a series of phases to expand and modernize the Carrot River facility. Totalling \$2.5 million, the plan will bring considerable new investment dollars into the Carrot river community.

Mr. Speaker, this upgrading and expansion will mean additional employment opportunities for Saskatchewan men and women, increased economic activity and jobs — two fundamental principles of the public participation initiative.

As well, Mr. Speaker, Premier Sask will fund a half-million-dollar project in research over the next three years in conjunction with a Saskatchewan research institution such as at the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, Kam-Kotia Mines and Premier Sask Inc. are leaders in their field and will bring needed investment, state of the art technology and new markets to Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this is a good financial deal. It is the highest of several offers and is above appraised values. The government is getting good value for its assets, and it will continue to receive tax and royalty payments.

This sale recognizes that the proper role of government is to facilitate growth in the economy. Operating salt mines in peat bogs is not an essential function of this government. Mr. Speaker, when government financing is scarce and choices are necessary, it is clear that the public's tax dollars should go toward the essential services such as health and education.

Over the last several years it became apparent that both the Chaplin and the Carrot River operations required new investment and new markets to protect jobs and to

achieve growth.

In this deal, Mr. Speaker, the public interest is clearly served by realizing the value of the public assets and attracting new economic development, investment research, and secure jobs for our Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, today's announcement shows once again how public participation will bring new growth to this province. It shows our commitment to public employees. The rights of the employees have been at the forefront of this deal. Their employment is secure. Their benefits and wages will be carried forward and collective agreements are honoured.

Mr. Speaker, the net result of this sale is that we have now a new investment of \$15.9 million in Saskatchewan that will work toward building and diversifying our economy, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, in response to the minister's statement — and I'm sorry that he couldn't have provided this side of the House with a copy of that statement — Mr. Speaker, in my view this is privatization of the worst possible kind, of the worst possible kind.

We learned in question period today that there were no tenders offered on the assets of Sask Minerals, no tenders offered, which can only lead us to the conclusion that this government, when it intends to sell off Saskatchewan assets, then will just hand them over to their hand-picked friends — not a tender, just pick your friends and give the Saskatchewan assets away. And in addition, Mr. Speaker, in this case I would submit that these assets have been given away to firms with a less than positive reputation in this province.

Mr. Speaker, this is privatization of the worst possible kind. In the 40-year history of Sask Minerals — and you will recall, Mr. Speaker, that Sask Minerals was founded to develop a resource in Saskatchewan, and with the alternate goal of employing young men coming home from the war. Well the sons and the daughters of those young men now need employment, Mr. Speaker, and the resource still needs to be developed. In the 40-year history of Sask Minerals, Mr. Speaker, this small corporation, on an investment of no more than two and a half million dollars from the people of Saskatchewan, this corporation has returned, paid out, over \$61 million in wages; it has paid over \$2 million in grants in lieu of taxes to the communities where the plants are located; it has paid over \$12 million in royalties to the Government of Saskatchewan; and it has paid over \$40 million, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Saskatchewan. And I say that's not bad on a two and a half million dollar investment.

Mr. Speaker, that success has been much due to the employees and the management of Sask Minerals, and they must be a group of people, very disappointed and very discouraged by what they've heard from this minister, and this Premier, as they've described Sask Minerals in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say that this minister gave a

commitment to the people of Saskatchewan that the people of this province would be consulted — consulted — before any further moves in privatization. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, this minister has made a mockery of the process of consultation — a mockery.

Mr. Speaker, I watched this minister in action out at Chaplin. He flies into the community at 11 o'clock. He meets with employees ...

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order. I think the member should be directing his remarks to the ministerial statement itself, not into ... Order. Order, please ... not into a meeting that took place in Chaplin, which I'm sure also has its own particular interests, but ... Order. Order, please. Order, please. Ministerial statements and replies to ministerial statements are not a forum for a debate, and I would just like to bring that to the attention of the members, and I'm sure they themselves know the rules.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I would find it a little easier to be very specific in referring to the minister's statement today if I had a copy of that statement.

Well, Mr. Speaker, then ... The minister, in this statement, referred to the book value of Sask Minerals — the market value. Mr. Minister, last year in Crown Corporations estimates a request was made by my colleague from Moose Jaw North for a copy of the appraisal, a copy of the independent appraisal of the value of the assets of Sask Minerals. To this ...

An Hon. Member: Was it promised?

Mr. Calvert: — It was promised, and to this day we have not received a copy of that appraisal. So we are asked to believe the minister when he says that we have received better than book value. Well, Mr. Speaker, we'll want to see that appraisal, we'll want to see it.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister made his statement, I did not hear him, I did not hear him give us any real assurance that Saskatchewan jobs would be protected in the long term. The employees of Sask Minerals may have a contract now. That contract will run out. What then? What then, Mr. Speaker? I have no assurance of a guaranteed expansion. I heard him give no assurance that the head office of Sask Minerals will remain in Chaplin.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me say that this is, in my judgement, the worst kind of privatization — privatization as my colleague from Moose Jaw North says. Saskatchewan assets which have belonged to all of the people of this province, which have benefited all the people of this province, have been sold out at a fire sale price to eastern interests, friends of this government. Mr. Speaker, with privatization the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, friends of the PCs are prospering, and the people are being asked to pay. That's PC privatization, and we've seen it again today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order. Order. Before we move to the next item of business, I would like to just make this comment regarding

ministerial statements and replies to ministerial statements.

I think that the ministerial statement today was a little long. I timed it and it was four ministers and 25 seconds; and I believe that the response to the ministerial statement was also a little long; in fact, a little longer, somewhere over five minutes.

I don't believe that ministerial statements and responses should be times for debate, and I hope that in the future both sides will shorten the statement and the answer to the statement ... (inaudible interjection) ... Order.

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 and the amendment thereto moved by Ms. Simard.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to begin by bringing greetings on behalf of the people of Regina Centre, the riding that I have represented. I have said on a number of past throne speeches that it's a riding in many ways unique: an inner city riding, a large measure of low-income people, but a significant number of upperly-mobile people living in the apartment blocks. It's a riding with as much diversity of people and incomes as, I think, any in the province.

I want to discuss the throne speech. It will be brief, Mr. Speaker, as befits the throne speech. The Lieutenant Governor, at the banquet in the evening, bordered on making a political comment, although he didn't, but he bordered on making a political comment when he said it was the shortest one that he had read. I think it's accurate to say that he has read ... this is his fifth throne speech. I think this is my sixteenth, and it's the shortest I think I've heard.

(1445)

Not only was it short, Mr. Speaker, it highlighted trivia and ignored the substantive issues of the day. Any number of people and editorials and cartoons have commented, mostly humorously, at the government's obsession with mad dogs, or angry dogs, as the case may be. We heard in some considerable detail what they're going to do with angry dogs; we heard nothing about some very substantive issues.

Mr. Speaker, I had, this morning, in the office downtown, no less than three people, three young people, all of whom were under 20, who came in looking for employment. That's three in one morning, Mr. Speaker, not a word in this throne speech about unemployment. The word "unemployment" did not appear in the throne speech. It's a government that finally thinks it's got its mind wrapped around angry dogs, dealt with a terribly serious and difficult issue but hasn't, apparently, anything

to say about the number of young people who are unable to find work.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this throne speech is a product of muddled thinking and a product of a government that's run out of inspiration and run out of ideas. And, Mr. Speaker, given its reluctance to call the by-elections, it seems to have run out of time as well, and run out of public sympathy.

Mr. Speaker, members of this side of the legislature have been saying for some years that your . . . this government's waste, its inefficiency and its incompetence, are going to bring some dire results. I think it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that we're beginning to see that. We're beginning to see it in the underfunding of our basic services — health, education.

We have, Mr. Speaker, the spectre of a strike at universities. I don't think, Mr. Speaker. . . I think it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that the people who undertook that did so with great reluctance. I think they would have given virtually anything to have avoided that action, but this government and its underfunding of universities left them no alternative.

We're faced with some very serious problems with respect to negotiations with teachers. While I don't wish to comment on those problems or exacerbate the difficulties the government has, suffice it to say that the problems stem from exactly the same source — a lack of resources given to schools to do that all-essential job.

The incompetency and the patronage, Mr. Speaker, is also showing up in the area of health. Mr. Speaker, I think all members of this Assembly meet and talk to large numbers of people, and so do I. Mr. Speaker, I haven't met or talked to a single, solitary soul who is anything but critical of the changes to the health care that took place last year.

I have not met a person who's prepared to defend the changes to the drug plan, and I've not met a person who's prepared to defend the changes to the dental care plan. This government's response to an angry citizenry is to set up a task force. It's obvious, Mr. Speaker, to the people of this province, that this government's simply attempting to shelve the problem while giving a false impression of doing something.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that the senior citizens in my riding and many others, who are facing drug bills of hundreds of dollars per month on incomes that sometimes are not much larger than their drug bills, aren't going to feel any better about their situation, knowing there's a task force which will report at some distant time in the future.

The parents who have to drive their children long distances for dental work aren't going to feel any better about that, knowing that this government has attempted to cosmeticize the problem by appointing a task force.

As the Leader of the Opposition so correctly pointed out, the health care system has been studied to death. What this health care system of ours needs is some resources; it does not need any further procrastination. And that's all

the task force is — it is just simply an attempt to procrastinate.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a moment talking about agriculture. That's not the prime industry of my constituency, but no one in this province who takes an interest in public affairs can help but be interested and concerned, I might add, about the problems in agriculture.

That was illustrated, Mr. Speaker, a few months ago. I was leaving the court-house. Unlike some members opposite, I was not leaving as a participant in the affairs there. Mr. Speaker, on the way out I stopped to talk to someone who I regard as a thoughtful and disinterested observer of elected office — that person said to me, I really don't envy you. I said, why? with a note of disbelief, because that person had sought, unsuccessfully, public office. That person said, well, he said, I can say it but you can't. He said, you know and I know that within a few years we're going to reach a situation in this province where there'll be 10,000 farmers farming 10,000 acres each. I don't know if the numbers work out or not, but he made his point. I didn't say anything at the time, but as I left and drove across the Wascana Creek to the Legislative Building, I thought to myself, is this what has happened in a hundred years?

My grandparents, and the grandparents of many people here, suffered incredible hardships, travelled half way around the world on the crudest of transportation, faced enormous difficulties. Why? It can all be summed up in one word . . . two words — free land — a chance to own their own land. That great migration, one of the great migrations of history, began about a century ago. I thought to myself, is that all it's taken is a hundred years. One century later are we going to be no different than the countries that my grandparents left, with a few large estates farmed by a few wealthy people? Well I think he may be right, if something isn't done, and if some assistance isn't provided to the agricultural community.

The government's response has been to throw money at it. I want to talk for a moment about the production loans. It was obvious, Mr. Speaker, to thoughtful observers at the time, that one of the primary problems in agriculture is that it's overcapitalized. Given the prices to be obtained, the farming industry was carrying farm more debt than it could service, and that is one of the primary problems the agriculture industry had.

It was apparent to thoughtful observers when the production loans came out that if you add a billion dollars in debt to the farming industry, you add very significantly to the problem.

That was apparent, Mr. Speaker, to people at the time. It's apparent to almost everyone now that that was the case, that that program was badly thought out, badly put together, and very badly flawed. None of that, however, Mr. Speaker, lends us much — because that's done and behind us — none of that lends us much assistance in knowing what we should do today.

About a month ago I attended, with the member from

Kelvington-Wadena, a meeting in Yorkton of farmers who had just received their notices from the government, a government which before the election, Mr. Speaker, promised them, and I think the phrase the member from Weyburn used was "hassle-free cash" in his . . . And I had an opportunity to reread the member's statement; only once did the word "loan" appear.

The member from Weyburn who — the minister of Agriculture at the time — who made the announcement was at pains to assure farmers that they'd never have to give another thought to this production loan because their friends were in office.

But I think, Mr. Speaker, it's fair to say that they found out how good a friends they were. This government, behaving in a fashion, I think, which would embarrass private bankers, have increased the interest rate and increased the security which they have.

Mr. Speaker, we still await . . . although we know with great certainty what you're going to do about angry dogs, we have not as yet had the Premier's statement on the production loans. I will venture to say to the member from Meadow Lake that I could find more of his constituents who are interested in what the Premier is going to do about production loans then he can find who were interested in what we're going to do about pit bulls.

I suspect that if the member from Meadow Lake spent any time in his riding, he'd find out that pit bulls are not a burning issues in Meadow Lake or in Regina Centre, but that production loans are.

The farmers of this province need and deserve a definitive statement from the Premier.

I can say, Mr. Speaker, that this is a loan which was ill-conceived. When private bankers make a loan which is ill-conceived, I think it's fair to say they're happy enough to get their interest, at least until things improve. I find it surprising, Mr. Speaker, that this government would deal with farmers in a way which is harsher than I think most private bankers would.

Mr. Speaker, the government, in my view, ought not to have increased the interest rate, ought not to have requested the principal back, and ought to have been satisfied to get six per cent interest on the loan until that desperate situation out there improves.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a comment about privatization. It is our view, Mr. Speaker, that not all services have to be provided by the public and not all Crown corporations are for ever fixed in the public sphere. Times change, circumstances change, and all things — all things — reach a stage where they might be re-evaluated.

In determining, however, what should be privatized and what shouldn't, I've developed four criteria — others might add to it — but I've developed four tests which I think are a minimum that any privatization scheme should meet. Firstly, is there genuine competition in the field? The privatization of the British Telecom, which turned a public monopoly into a private monopoly to the

distress of virtually everyone in Britain, I think illustrates what happens when you create a private monopoly. They are even less accessible and less responsive than a public monopoly.

Secondly, is a fair price being obtained for the assets that are being sold. Is the public treasury getting a fair price? I was distressed to read of Mr. Perry's comments and his suggestions when speaking to a Conservative banquet, that in fact you ought to sell the assets for less of what they're worth, so that shortly after you sell them the price of the stock will go up and the public who bought them will think they've got a hold of a really good deal. Might be a good deal for the money . . . for the people with the money to buy the stocks, but it's a very bad deal for the taxpayers of this province. And I predict, Mr. Speaker, that, as I think some of the media have reported, that there's lots of bad news for the taxpayers in the weeks ahead without adding and contributing to the problem with these ill-advised deals.

Thirdly, will the public treasury lose revenue? If it is, how is that to be made up? If the public treasure is going to lose revenue, who's going to pick it up? Is it to be the taxpayer?

Fourthly, does it provide a necessary public service, and will that be lost? I just want to run over, for a brief moment, some of the privatizations which this government has undergone, the latest one of which I heard about for the first time today. And the question posed by the member from Moose Jaw North and South, but particularly the member from Moose Jaw North — the sale of the SPC building in Moose Jaw. I'm astonished that that building — and I know a little bit about that building, I grew up in Moose Jaw — I'm astonished that that building would sell for \$200,000.

(1500)

I just simply fail to understand how you can sell a building of that size and that quality for \$200,000. Mr. Speaker, that's the price of a small office building; that's the price of a decent sized house that you can convert into an office building. That SPC building, I believe, is worth many times that price.

And I say to Mr. Speaker, and to members opposite, that those are some facts which we are going to want to know. We're going to want to know why the people who . . . the public of this province who depend on SPC for their power should pay for this kind of an ill-advised transaction. I say to the minister opposite, if there's an appraisal available which suggests that building is worth \$200,000, I want to see it, because I don't think anyone should make an argument that that building's worth a quarter of a million dollars. It's worth a great deal more than that.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to spend a moment reviewing others of this government's sales: Saskoil was a fair price obtained? Of course not. Shares were sold for less than their book value at the time they were being sold. Did the public receive, did the public treasury receive less income? Of course it did. Saskoil has paid dividends to the Minister of Finance almost from its beginning. Saskoil bought in a depressed — at a time when the oil patch was

depressed, Saskoil bought all of the leases of Atlantic Richfield, and they had a large presence in Saskatchewan. Almost from day one Saskoil returned significant profits back to the treasury, and those were lost.

Sask Mining also fails the same tests — the public did not get their money out of it, and the public treasury is receiving a lot less income. Mr. Speaker, we don't stand opposed to every sale of public assets. Circumstances change — sometimes they're not necessary. We do stand firmly opposed to this government selling assets owned by the taxpayer at far less than they're worth without any thought of where the revenue's going to be made up. I think, Mr. Speaker, the public are going to see in a few days where the revenue's going to be made up; it's going to be made up in increased taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a couple of moments talking about issues which have arisen in the area of human rights. I do so, Mr. Speaker, knowing that by its very nature, human rights deals with the rights of minorities. If those minorities were popular with the public, there'd be no need for human rights legislation. Therefore our essence of human rights legislation is that it provides protection to people who cannot depend on public support to protect their rights.

Mr. Speaker, it's one of the incontrovertible facts of Saskatchewan's history that almost all significant advances in the area of human rights have taken place when a CCF or an NDP government is in office. It is also an incontrovertible fact that the abuses of human rights by the government has taken place when a Liberal or Conservative government is in office.

A few days ago the Canadian public were treated to the spectacle of a former federal cabinet minister's diaries being made public — Don Jamieson. And thus I think it's timely to review the events of 1971 and the implementation of the War Measures Act.

I want to remind members opposite, the War Measures Act was introduced in 1971. Four hundred people were arrested without any of the usual protections. In Quebec, not a single, solitary convection ever took place out of those 400 arrests. A handful were charged; all were acquitted.

We know now from Don Jamieson's diary that the federal cabinet knew at the time it introduced the War Measures Act that it could not be justified, but it was a politically expedient thing to do. I remind members opposite that that which must now rank as the most serious violation of civil liberties in this country's history was done by a Liberal government, but supported by every Conservative member of the House of Commons, and only the NDP in the federal House of Commons had the courage to say, no, this is not right.

Two issues have arisen in this province that I want to comment on. I want to begin with a comment on the Premier's reaction to Svend Robinson's statement. Fair-minded people throughout this province were embarrassed to hear the kind of comments that we did coming from the office of the Premier. They were

embarrassed to hear someone so apparently narrow-minded and shallow holding the office of Premier of this province. The comments which he made would have been out of place in a bar, much less a news conference given by the Premier.

Whatever we may think about Mr. Robinson's life-style — and we will have different views on that — he showed considerable courage in making the statement that he did. And I think had it not been for the Premier of this province, the Premier's reaction to it, the whole issue might not have attracted anywhere near as much attention as it did. If the Premier was intent upon stirring up public sentiment, he was certainly successful.

I may say, Mr. Speaker, that I got a good deal of correspondence on the issue. Many people included what one might, I suppose, for lack of a better term, educational material, background papers on homosexuality. Some of it was pure trash, but among the letters some people included some material which was scholarly and reliable.

Mr. Speaker, I was surprised at how little scientific data there is on the subject, but what I got suggests to me that a couple of conclusions can be drawn, one of which is that if it's an acquired trait, it's acquired at a very early age in life and is irreversible. Secondly, it appears that it is not something that can be learned; and thirdly — this was a revelation for me — it appears in sociological studies that have been done, that the incidence of homosexuality does not vary from societies which are very tolerant of it to societies which are very, very intolerant. It is in all societies throughout the world, something that occurs in about 10 per cent of the population.

One has to ask, therefore, if it's something that can't be learned and can't be acquired and won't increase with tolerance, one wonders what the Premier hoped to accomplish with his tirade and his actions which whipped up public sentiment.

Mr. Speaker, I say that fair-minded people everywhere were horrified at the Premier's discussion of a member of parliament, who had done nothing illegal, in the same context as bank robbers. As any number of people pointed out, Mr. Speaker, robbing banks is illegal. Being homosexual is not, has not been for several decades, and when that change was made in the Criminal Code, all Conservative members of the federal parliament voted for it.

A great number of people have called the Premier a bigot. I just wish, Mr. Premier, I could be that charitable, because being a bigot implies a certain degree of ignorance. I don't think for a moment the Premier made that statement out of ignorance. I believe that he cynically saw a minority who were out of favour and therefore unable to protect their rights and call upon public support. The Premier, who was blind and uncaring to the difficulties he caused that community of people, took advantage of the situation to ingratiate himself with those people whose intolerance and narrow-mindedness feeds on the abuse of other people.

Mr. Minister, I want to make a comment as well, and I

shall have to do so relatively briefly. I want to make a comment on another issue in the area of human rights, brought to us this time by the Supreme Court, and I refer to the *Mercure* decision. I regret very much that I cannot give any portion of this speech in French. There's those who say that I haven't quite mastered the English language, much less the French, but I do want to make a comment on it.

The decision, I might add, has yet to be explored in full detail, but it appears that the decision establishes the principle that the current law of the province requires that laws, both past and present, Mr. Speaker, and the proceedings of this Assembly, appear in both of Canada's official languages. At the same time, a decision of the Saskatchewan Queen's Bench provided, states that parents, French-speaking parents who want to send their children to a French school, have a right to a separate school board to administer that school system.

Many Saskatchewan people are aware that Saskatchewan has one of the smallest French populations in Canada. The figures I have are that 6 per cent of the Saskatchewan public claim France as their country of ethnic origin, and just 3 per cent still speak the language.

It is not obvious to people in Saskatchewan, when we have such a small French population, why documents should appear in both languages. The reasons, Mr. Speaker, are historical, and I want to spend a moment or two discussing those reasons.

After the loss of the American colonies in the 18th century, it became the policy of the British Empire to allow all conquered peoples to retain their language, their customs, and their laws. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of visiting Mexico — I might add at my own expense, it was a holiday — during the recess, and I can tell you that that policy of allowing people to retain their customs, laws, and language was by no means universal among European colonial powers; indeed, it was the exception.

That policy was, of course, extended to Canada in 1763 by the Quebec Act and subsequent Acts. The success of the policy soon became evident. Scarcely 50 years after the Quebec Act, the Americans invaded. Soon the French, particularly the French, but the English as well, would rise up and assist them, and the victory in Canada would be a relatively easy affair.

The war of 1812 was the only war that the United States of America has lost in its history. It was defeated soundly, in part by British troops, but mainly because the French and the English joined together to defend their young country; and so Canada survived.

Our generation, Mr. Speaker, is not one that has the luxury of believing that we can take the French fact for granted. We know, because of the recent referendum, that the French remain in Canada as a voluntary matter. We've inherited the bargain made by the British. We're morally and legally obligated to obey it. Some do not think it is a wise bargain. I'd simply remind such people that the policy of allowing people to retain their own language and their own culture underpin the success of the British

Empire, far more so than the guns of the Royal Navy — a tolerance showed to people encouraged them to think that they would have a place within the British Empire and, in fact, very few people ever wanted to — very few countries ever wanted to leave.

Since the Supreme Court decision came out, we in the opposition have been urging the government to sit down with the French community and negotiate an agreement, one more trifling issue that I guess was shoved aside by angry dogs and the need to highlight that in the throne speech. We believe that people in the French community are reasonable people who share with us a desire to avoid the sort of acrimonious debate that took place in Manitoba and elsewhere.

(1515)

We say to the government opposite that if you have the good will, the sense and the courage to set down and negotiate the matter with them, you can negotiate an agreement which will meet the needs of all concerned.

Given this government's reluctance to face the public in the by-elections, it's becoming increasingly obvious to many Saskatchewan people that after the next election, this government will be consigned to the annals of history. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that history is going to judge this government very harshly. It will be said that you inherited one of Canada's best health care systems and you wrecked it out of ignorance. It will be said you took a government with soundly-managed finances and turned that into a shambles which will take years and years to undo. I think it will be said, Mr. Speaker, that you were befriended by farmers — you played games with them before the election and have ignored them ever since. It will be said of your policies that you created hunger in an area which calls itself the bread-basket of the world. It will be said, Mr. Speaker, that this government has ignored one of the most ancient duties of a ruler: to feed thy people.

But the harshest criticism, I believe, Mr. Speaker, will be reserved for the way this government has, with calculated cruelty, singled out one minority after another and whipped up public sentiment against them. You have treated anyone who isn't male, Caucasian, and well-off as if it were their problem that they weren't part of that privileged minority.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and the members opposite, that the public are not so cruel or uncaring, and if you disagree, I invite you to call the by-election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — We say to you, if you have the courage, do so. One riding, Mr. Speaker, is an inner-city riding, relatively low income. The other riding is a relatively affluent riding. You're going to face the same prospect in them both, and that's loss.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the desperate situation they find themselves in with respect to the by-elections proves that you can't divide Saskatchewan people. If you single out any of them, you single out them all. All we ask is that

you give the public in those two by-elections an opportunity to express themselves on your policies.

It goes without say, Mr. Speaker, that I'll be voting against the motion and for the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLaren: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure and an honour for me to participate in this debate in reply to the Speech from the Throne. And as government caucus chairman, Mr. Speaker, allow me to welcome you back to your chair, and also to welcome all members back to the Assembly for another session of what I'm sure will be a productive and interesting work.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to thank my constituents of Yorkton for their positive attitude and indeed their hard work to cause our city to grow and provide a decent and interesting place in which to live.

In my mind, Mr. Speaker, the people of Yorkton are among the best in the world. They are builders and doers, Mr. Speaker, even during these last few difficult economic years. We have seen growth and progress in our city, whole new regions of the city that have been ... the housing starts are being far beyond our expectation. Apartment buildings are being put up, commercial buildings are being built, and I was very, very pleased on the weekend to read in our local newspapers that the Yorkton Co-op is building a \$3.2 million retail outlet on the east side of this city. They have the attitude that things are going to be good, and are good, in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I invite every member of this Assembly to take time out this year to come and visit our city and enjoy its fine restaurants, recreational facilities, dedicated businesses in our community, and its excellent hospitality. And I'm sure the member from Saskatoon South enjoyed the perogies and the cabbage rolls and those specialty items that are on the menus in the cafes in Yorkton.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech said a number of important principles and objectives of the government, and a number of those are of historic importance to our province.

Trade, and particularly the free trade agreement with the United States, represents the opportunity to address a demand of western Canada, and of the people of Saskatchewan, since confederation, and even before confederation. Free trade has been a rallying cry in this province for over a hundred years, Mr. Speaker, and because the freedom to trade with the world without interference is the first requirement for long-term growth and prosperity, I find it beyond my comprehension, Mr. Speaker, as to why there is absolutely no economic argument against free trade in Canada, the United States, or in the entire world, as far as that's concerned.

And what are we talking about in free trade? Eighty-three percent of our trade is already tariff free, so we're talking about 17 per cent yet to do. And it really amuses me when I hear the members of the opposition and their leader,

national leader, and Bob White and the union leaders saying that we will lose our sovereignty if we go into the free trade deal. What utter nonsense, Mr. Speaker, absolute balderdash!

We look at the European Economic Community which have been trading freely over 25 years. And as far as I'm concerned the English are still English, the French are still French, the Germans are still German, and it's amazing to see that the Greeks are signing the economic deal in the European community.

I just want to comment, Mr. Speaker, on the pleasure and the honour that I have had over the last 31 years, prior to getting into politics, or working for a company and a man, Morris Rod-Weeder Company, and the sole owner of that company, Mr. George Morris. And I can go back to 1930 when he designed a piece of farm machinery, 1929-1930, in difficult times. But he designed a piece of equipment that was going to assist the farmers of our country in controlling moisture or conserving moisture and controlling weeds, to cut the cost of farming.

He started out in a little shop, building eight-foot machines that were horse-drawn. But even with those small pieces of equipment it became very positive that the farmers of Saskatchewan were wanting to buy that equipment and do their farming. He could have said, let's just do a few machines a year and work in Saskatchewan. But no, what happened was that the farmers in Alberta, and in Manitoba all of a sudden heard of this piece of equipment, and the need to manufacture more happened. And then in 1960, Mr. Speaker, he built a plant in Yorkton, Saskatchewan to accommodate the production requirements to serve that market.

We had 23 people working for us in the first year, and it would have been very easy and nice to just have an operation in Saskatchewan and build machines and sell them and not go beyond our borders. But the demand for equipment didn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. The next thing we knew that the United States was wanting to buy our equipment, so dealer and organization was set up in the United States. And that is trade; that's what we call trade.

And it didn't end in the United States. We stated getting orders from Australia. And I'm pleased to say that we were able to manufacture equipment in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, ship it by truck to Vancouver, put it in containers and onto boats, three weeks to Australia, then onto trucks to get delivered to the dealers in Australia. And we were able to compete. We could sell our equipment cheaper than what they were manufacturing in their own country, and there was tariffs as well.

So after a few years there we were able to make an agreement with Australian companies to bring their equipment Canada, which we got the manufacturing rights for. So here was trade both ways. We're still Canadian; they're still Australian.

It didn't end there, Mr. Speaker. We had distributors in France. We sold equipment to Algeria. We sold equipment to Costa Rica. And I can remember being in Algiers in northern Africa with the Canadian pavilion showing our equipment over there.

So this is what trading is all about. It doesn't matter if you're large corporations or small corporations. It's there for your use. Statistics prove conclusively that without trade we cannot grow, we cannot prosper, we cannot even maintain what we have.

The evidence also clearly demonstrates that the free trade agreement will mean better opportunities for our province, both for consumers and producers. Mr. Speaker, let me cite some of the evidence produced by independent sources.

Tim Hazeldine, a professor of economics at the University of British Columbia, has said his detailed study of the subject concludes that free trade will lead to, and I quote, "a drop in the cost of living of about 2 per cent, or perhaps as much as 4 per cent." And that equivalent is the same, Mr. Speaker, as a wage increase of 2 to 4 per cent, a wage increase without the stress of labour disputes, without concessions, without argument. The Economic Council of Canada has gone even farther and predicted a drop in the cost of living of 6 per cent and the creation of 350,000 jobs.

Richard Garlick of the Consumers' Association of Canada said, and I quote, "There's no question that the free trade agreement will favour consumers." And I think it's hard to get more basic than that, Mr. Speaker. For a man whose career it is to protect and promote the interests of consumers, we hear that there is no question that the deal is good for consumers.

Mr. Speaker, why would our hog producers be against the free trade agreement? They know that we already have a good piece of the market of the U.S. bacon and pork market areas, and they know that we are going to get an even bigger share of that market.

I had the pleasure to be in California at Christmas time, Mr. Speaker, and I felt real proud when I went into a restaurant in Anaheim, California, to order eggs and bacon, and when I looked at the menu, in brackets opposite was "Canadian bacon."

Our bacon producers are shipping up to 40 per cent of their production already to a market in Los Angeles. Why shouldn't they have free trade back and forth? Here's a 7 million population city that we can ship our bacon to, and even if we carved out just a little niche in that market, that means tremendous increases of production requirements and jobs for our people here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of farm equipment manufacturers in this province as well, and it is true that farm equipment is tariff free. It has been travelling back and forth for a number of years without any duties; however, it goes further than that. There are irritants that come up from time to time, and we in the farm machinery business, if we shipped a complete machine across the line to the United States, it was all duty free. However, if a farmer in Kansas City, for example, had a breakdown and there was a hydraulic cylinder problem, we built hydraulic cylinders in Yorkton to suit our machinery which was unique, but when you go across the border, the tariff manuals say "hydraulic cylinders." It doesn't

matter what they do or what they're supposed to do, so it ended up that that farmer would have to pay duty on that hydraulic cylinder to get operational again.

(1530)

The free trade agreement will get rid of all those kinds of irritants. The agreement will eliminate duties and tariffs, and this will enhance the farm machinery sector of this province.

Needless to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased that the government, along with our leader, the member from Estevan, will continue to pursue the opportunities presented by the free trade agreement, and that the energy and skills of our people will be allowed to participate in that market of 250 million people to the south of us.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech was also clear in its commitment to health care in this province. And it is a little unsettling to hear the opposition — and we just heard it 10 minutes ago — day after day, telling the people that we have this terrible health care system in Saskatchewan.

When I look back to 1981 and see the amount that was budgeted for by the members opposite compared to what we are budgeting now in 1987, there's a \$500 million increase in money. So how can they have the gall to keep saying that the medicare system is being underfunded and decimated, and these are the words that we keep hearing every day, Mr. Speaker.

We have the highest quality health care system in North America, bar none. We have the broadest coverage, the largest and most generous programs of any jurisdiction on the continent — a budget, Mr. Speaker, of \$1.3 billion.

And let me express the gratitude of the people of Yorkton, Mr. Speaker, for the extensive additions and renovations to the health care facilities of our city. We have had a major \$10 million expansion onto the Yorkton Union Hospital, a completely new emergency ward, and the beginning of an infrastructure to allow that hospital to expand in the future. This was a phase 1 expansion; brand-new laundry for \$5 million to do laundry, not only for our own hospital and nursing homes in Yorkton, but for the outlying communities; brand-new boiler set up for a heating system of \$1.2 million dollars.

We now, Mr. Speaker, have the Whitespruce alcohol and drug treatment facility with a projected expenditure of \$5 million dollars over the next five years. And I am pleased today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to let members of the Assembly know that the first clients have been registered and are now beginning their treatment in that facility in Yorkton.

And that gives me an opportunity to put something in perspective, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The savings to the government from the modifications to the dental program amounted to about 45 million, and we had to make some choices as a government, but we were told by many, many people around this province that teeth were not the problem, that the drugs and the alcohol abuse —

especially in our teenagers — was a priority, and so the decision was made to convert and transfer moneys over into that priority and, as I said, the facility is now up and running.

The expenditures for the world class facility for treatment of alcohol and drug problems among our youth are, as I stated, \$5 million dollars.

And that points out the kind of decision making that has to be made, Mr. Speaker. We have to balance, as a society, for various needs and demands of the system, and I believe the people of Yorkton and the people of Saskatchewan will agree that a fair and effective balance is being achieved. Whitespruce represents a powerful example of the philosophy of this government, Mr. Speaker.

In Yorkton as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are pleased to have seen two new senior citizens' complexes built containing approximately 60 suites — Victoria Place and Fisher Court have been built during the last few years and, in fact, Fisher Court will be opened in the next few weeks. And we are truly appreciative of the concern that this government shows for our seniors.

Last fall we also officially opened a new 40-bed addition to the Yorkton and District Nursing Home. And I would like at this point to thank my colleagues, the hon. member from Indian Head-Wolseley and the hon. member from Meadow Lake, for working with our people in Yorkton to make these projects a reality.

I also want to commend the government for demonstrated support for the ancillary services in our community. And I think of one, particularly of Yorkton's Shelwin House, a home for battered women, and how successful that centre has been in serving the women of our city in a compassionate, fair, and efficient manner.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, health care is a very important issue, and so important that the minister is establishing a very professional task force. I met in the last three weeks to a month, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with nurses in our community, with some of our doctors, and the main message that I got out of those meetings was that these associations and these groups are wanting to have the opportunity to make recommendations and suggestions on how to improve our health care system . . . very emphatic in their words to me that this is what they really wanted to do, and I was pleased to be able to tell them that there is a task force being set up that they will have the opportunity to present their ideas and their brief to. The result of the task force process will provide us with the blueprint that the Minister of Health has spoken of, a blueprint that will continue to provide the best health care system in North America.

One other item I'd like to just touch briefly on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is diversification. What is diversification? It means the support of businesses to diversify, government to diversify, which will all create jobs. I've listed a few of them here. The upgrader here in Regina, the \$600 million project where at last Saskatchewan will be able to make use of its heavy oil resource and manufacture gasoline here through the

refinery. I can remember the NDP talking about it years ago, but it never happened.

I look at the paper mill in Prince Albert.

An Hon. Member: That's one they said wouldn't be built.

Mr. McLaren: — That's right. There was — years — last two years all we've heard is the smoke and mirrors, it will never happen, it will never get built. Well it's built, and we don't hear boo out of those people across there.

I had the opportunity a week ago to go through that facility, and we in Saskatchewan need to be proud that there is a paper mill to that magnitude and with that high technology that they have that we'll be able to produce paper here in Saskatchewan. And here again the free trade will come into play where we will be able to take that paper and sell it all over North America.

The bacon plant in North Battleford, and the addition to the Intercon in Saskatoon — and I have already mentioned the participation that they've got in shipping bacon to the United States.

The recreational vehicle and trailer complex in North Battleford — I haven't seen it, but I understand it's a very, very efficient operation and one that we can be proud of having here in our province.

And I think of the natural gas program to our small towns and our rural communities, tremendous savings in the costs of heating and running their shops. I heard the NDP talk about it years before we got elected — oh, it was going to cost too much money — but it's being done.

I can think of the Buy Saskatchewan program that I had the pleasure of introducing when I was minister in charge of SaskPower. SaskPower is buying hundreds of millions of product here in Saskatchewan now, compared to less than 100 million before. All this is giving our small industries an opportunity to participate in the growth of our province instead of ordering equipment and supplies from other provinces and the United States.

The turbine manufacturing plant in Saskatoon, where we will be building turbines, has covered the North American market. And the list goes on and on and on, Mr. Speaker, many of the smaller businesses that I'm sure have expanded their facilities due to these programs.

So needless to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be proud to support the motion of my colleague, the member for Rosthern. Thank you for the opportunity and the time to present my remarks this morning, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — I rise today to take part in this throne speech debate, a throne speech that I might add that was barren of any foresight or any future for this province as we listen for the 16 minutes that it took to present the throne speech.

Usually when a throne speech is brought down by a

government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has a blueprint for the coming year and for the future, and most certainly as you go through this document, you find neither one.

I want to compare the throne speech that was presented last week to some of the throne speeches that were presented underneath the government of Allan Blakeney. And when you take a look at the difference in the documents and the content, it's pretty clear as to why we're in such great problems, economic problems, in the province of Saskatchewan.

When we were . . . when Allan Blakeney was presenting budgets, I might add, 11 balanced budgets in this legislature, and some of the remarks that were made in the throne speech were like this: throughout the year, 14,000 additional jobs were created, and I might add, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those were 14,000 good jobs, long-term jobs with security.

And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you take a look at the throne speech that was brought forward by this Conservative government, you see no mention of jobs, just a small, small part, and I will get to that a little later on. No blueprint for next year and most certainly no blueprint for the future.

Highways and roads: there was absolutely nothing mentioned about the highways and road system in this province that are being deteriorated at this time — and, I might add, little or no construction taking place. Major highways that should be built — take Highway 55 from Big River to Green Lake. In the last six years, 14 kilometres started by your government, and not one of those kilometres has been completed yet. And that is a major artery between Green Lake and Big River which links up Prince Albert and your constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of Shellbrook and north-west Saskatchewan — not a mention. Highways and roads such as into Canoe Narrows and Cole Bay, important roads, roads that need to be rebuilt and roads that are dangerous to the public that are travelling on them — no mention at all.

This does not seem to be a priority, but I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the priority seems to be now with Weyerhaeuser. And I want to now turn to a document that I have, and it relates, Mr. Speaker, to the highways and road system which I think are totally being destroyed in this province and are going to be destroyed far more severely when Weyerhaeuser implements its new policy with the trucking industries in this province.

(1545)

I have a document here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that indicates that in Big River alone, 12 . . . from 27 truckers that are operating right now, hauling timber into the plant in Prince Albert, that will be cut down to 12 trucks. Now that is a severe blow for the community of Big River and in that north-west part of Saskatchewan — a real severe blow, because many of those truckers both haul timber to Big River and to Meadow Lake and into the Prince Albert mill. And they're cutting that down; from 27 trucks, they're cutting it down to 12.

And that's not the worst part of it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What they are saying to the truckers that remain, are going to remain there to haul timber, is that they have to get heavier equipment to haul. What they are going to do now, they are going to make them buy new equipment, which equipment I might add, that have air-lift steering, and I will explaining that in just a minute — air-lift steering that is outlawed in other provinces in Canada.

But what is going to take place now, and they're telling the truckers in Big River, and this is Weyerhaeuser, the corporation that was brought in by the Conservative government, that they were given \$250 million worth of Saskatchewan assets and were going to provide secure, long-term jobs and the survival of our small communities. That's the corporation that we're talking about right now.

Now what they're going to do, they're going to say that you're going to have to increase the width of your trailers to 10 feet, you're going to have to increase the weight from 56,000 tonnes . . . kilograms to 74,000 tonnes. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . And you know what that's going to mean to your constituency and the area in Shellbrook where these trucks are going to be hauling the timber. That is going to mean disaster.

And when you take air-lift steering, that means that they're going into seven-axle trucks from five-axle trucks, but when they're out there free-wheeling on the highways and our roads, they will lift up a set of the wheels or the dollies and they'll revert back to the five-axle truck. And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what that is going to mean to our highways and road system. It is going to mean a disaster.

And I said before that opening up that link between Big River and Green Lake and into the Meadow Lake area was nor a priority any more. In the last six years, 14 kilometres not completed. But you go back to Big River and six miles south, and you see a brand-new highway being constructed up on the opposite side of Cowan Lake where it should never, never be — no reason to put a road up there. The only reason is for Weyerhaeuser. And that is a highway that is being built by the taxpayers of this province.

And that's what's taking place there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And what is really happening in this situation is that there are 34 families involved in this cut-back that are going to lose their livelihood in the communities of Big River and in Meadow Lake and Green Lake and Shellbrook area. They're going to lose their livelihood.

And if the operators don't convert to the 10-foot trucks, then they will lose their seniority list and they will lose their jobs, also. So they are going to be forced to use this heavy equipment. And that's the corporation.

And the member from Turtleford, he says he cannot tell a private corporation what to do, when his constituents asked him to intervene. So they can't tell this corporation what to do because it's a private corporation and they will do what they like. They'll destroy our highway system. They think nothing of laying off the truckers and destroying the families. Some of those individuals who have up to a million dollars invested in equipment are now scratching for work, and they just can't get work.

This is the type of operation that we have there.

When they talk about jobs — and I indicated in our throne speech — and that was just one of them; I have many of them here that I took the time to go back and look over. And I see that in the throne speech we see the Conservative government makes this one statement:

We must continue the thrust to diversify our economy so we can continue to create jobs and provide a higher standard of living for the people in this province.

Then the member from Yorkton just got up and he indicates that the Conservative government has increased Social Services budget by a half a billion dollars. And he stood up in this House just five minutes ago, and he was very proud of the fact that your government, sir, has increased the Social Services budget by a half a billion dollars . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well the Minister of Education was not listening very closely because I tell you, you can look at *Hansard* and you'll find out that the member from Yorkton just made the statement that his Conservative government, and you are a part of it, sir, has increased the social welfare budget by a half a billion dollars. And that was his words. He thought that was pretty . . . that's progress, progress, and that is creating jobs.

I say that is not creating jobs. One just has to go out into Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and take a look at the jobs that are being created. They are welfare jobs all right. And that's where you get your figures of a half a billion dollars increase in the Conservative budget for welfare because you're paying individuals in this province who are on welfare to work for two weeks, and then they take two weeks off and then they work again for another two weeks.

And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in all honesty, that I'm sure that you wouldn't want to have a job like that where you work for two weeks and then you had no job for another two weeks and then you could go back. And these are welfare jobs and these are the jobs that the member from Yorkton was speaking about; this is part of the half a billion dollar budget or increase in Social Services budget that he was talking about. And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this kind of a policy is a dangerous policy, and what it is creating is a fear in Saskatchewan — a fear and a human disaster and one that we should not tolerate.

I want to now turn, Mr. Speaker, to a region that was not mentioned in this throne speech. And I go back to the throne speeches of Allan Blakeney — and you can take a look at all his throne speeches and he always mentioned northern Saskatchewan, a region that is one of the most depressed, economically depressed regions in our province — not one mention. And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that is a shame when we live in a province where our Premier goes down to Ottawa, and he makes statements that this Canada is a Canada that is built of regions, and we do have regional disparities and we have to address them. And I say, yes, you have to address them, but you don't have to address them by

throwing a half a billion dollars increase in your Social Services budget. That is not solving the regional disparities that we have in this province.

And that's the kind of jobs that are being created all over this province, from one end to the other, it's jobs on welfare. Corporations who are in here working and they tap those jobs; and smaller businesses, they take part in this. They hire people who are on welfare for two weeks, then they lay them off for two weeks, then they hire two more individuals for another two weeks. And I say to the member from Wilkie, I'm sure that you wouldn't want to work just for two weeks and then be laid off for two weeks. I know that, and I think it's time for the member from Wilkie to stand up and be counted. I'm sure that that's not the way that you would want to work. I'm sure you appreciate going to work every week and getting a pay cheque, and we would all like that.

But as I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the citizens out there in Saskatchewan are frustrated with these policies of the Conservative government, policies that have to come to an end.

I now want to turn to the deficit that we have in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I never heard anything in that throne speech that would indicate how you are going to solve the problem.

An Hon. Member: Well then you didn't listen.

Mr. Thompson: — Yes, I was listening very closely, and I never heard anything in the throne speech that would indicate how you are going to solve the problem of the \$3.5 billion deficit that we have in this province today.

I just want to explain to you and through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and to the rest of the House, how we got into this terrible mess. It didn't happen by chance. In 1982 the Conservative government of this province took over the provincial treasury with \$129 million to the good, after 11 straight, consecutive, balanced budgets by the Allan Blakeney government. They quickly turned that around to deficit budgeting, and now we're faced with a \$3.5 billion deficit in this province — \$3.5 billion deficit.

And I tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a serious situation, and it's a situation that has to be solved. And it's a situation that can't be solved on the back of the poor by creating the type of an atmosphere that you're creating — by creating jobs that pay 4.50 an hour and you only work for two weeks. That's not how you solve this massive deficit.

And really, when you take a look at what happened in 1982, you had \$129 million in the bank; you had an unemployment rate in this province of less than 4 per cent. Now we have \$3.5 billion deficit, and we have an unemployment rate, I would suggest if you took off all the welfare jobs that you take credit for, well over 12 per cent in this province. And that is disastrous.

And it's very simple. It's very simple, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how this has taken place. It has taken place because your government is imposing a Conservative ideology, and that is what's really taken place. You're imposing a

Conservative ideology, and that has been laying dormant since 1934. All of a sudden you get back into power after 50 years of dormancy, and now you want to take it out on the citizens of Saskatchewan. And I will get into this a little more as to just what you're doing.

But you know, when you compare the 11 balanced budgets of Allan Blakeney, and now you take a look at the short six years that you have been in power, and you have got this massive deficits. And I suspect that you're going to see, when the budget is brought down on Thursday, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we're going to probably have another 3, \$400 million added on to that deficit.

An Hon. Member: Well what do you want us to do, solve it overnight?

Mr. Thompson: — That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, shows you the mentality of the Minister of Education who says from his seat, "What do you want us to do, solve it overnight?" Well I tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they created this situation almost overnight, as soon as you took power.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — As soon as you took power you went on the rampage, and one of your first things that you did, you fired 220 Highways workers and literally destroyed all the families that went with those jobs. You started off on the right foot, and now he sits there and he says, well do you want us to solve it overnight? Well I say that just shows why you are in the mess that you're in. And you can . . . he can bang his hand on the desk as much as he wants, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm just telling him the truth.

But you know, 11 years ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there were good jobs in this province, and we were creating jobs every year — 14,000 in 1977 — houses were being built, everybody was working, and they were good jobs, good long-term jobs, but they're no longer; no longer there any more. Now we have the welfare jobs.

And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by implementing this type of Conservative ideology they have literally destroyed the family structure in this province. They've destroyed families, and they're continuing on that rampage right now, all in the name of Conservative ideology.

And I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how can this be stopped? Well it can only be stopped if the Conservative back-benchers who occupy the back-benches of that government, their Conservative government, will stand up and be counted. And I say be counted. And then if you don't stand up and be counted, then we have to wait for the next general election, and at that time I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, your government will be turfed out and turfed out exactly like it was in 1934.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And I say, and I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and through you to the Minister of Education, who continually is chirping from his seat and banging his desk, that the members who occupy the back-benches of that party over there have to stand up. They have to stand up and be counted because we cannot allow this to take

place in this province, and I give you the examples that have just happened today of Chaplin and Carrot River. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all of sudden you're going to privatize, and what is happening? You're going to destroy another couple of small communities like Chaplin and Carrot River.

(1600)

And I say it's time for the private members who occupy the back-benches on that side of the House to stand up and be counted, and stand up and fight for what you think is right, not sit behind the ideology that's being imposed by a few senior cabinet ministers who have been in that cabinet ever since day one. There's really been no change — the odd addition, small portfolios, very small — but you still have the major players who are in there.

And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I say to the member from Wilkie, that those same ministers, the majority of them, will never be running again. Their political careers are over. They have done a job. They went out and they have literally destroyed this province, and I think that you have to stand up and be counted and put a stop to what's taking place, because the majority of those cabinet ministers will never run again. Their political careers are over. Their political careers are over, and I think if the private members on that side believe in Saskatchewan, believe in the political process, and if they believe that they have a future, a political future in this province, then I say stand up and put a stop to this government's privatization plans that are going on right now. It has to come to an end.

The minister of privatization, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he said about three weeks ago, when he took over that portfolio, that he wasn't going to privatize until he consulted with the citizens of Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, and I say to the member from Wilkie, it's time that you stood up; it's time that you stood up and be counted because I'm sure that this is not the way you think. I am sure you don't believe in the welfare jobs, and I'm sure you don't believe in destroying small-town Saskatchewan. I'm sure you don't believe in that. And I say to you, stand up. Stand up and be counted.

But the member of privatization indicated that he was going to go out and talk to the citizens of Saskatchewan before he went on his rampage. And I want to say that this was not in their election campaign, Mr. Deputy Speaker. None of the Conservative members went around this province campaigning on the fact that they were going to continue to privatize our industries. None of them went around this province saying they were going to destroy the drug program. None of you went around this province campaigning on the fact that you were going to fire 423 dental nurses and dental therapists and destroy their lives. You didn't campaign on that. So I say to you as back-benchers, I don't believe that you believe in what is happening here today. And I ask you to stand up. I ask you to stand up and be counted and put a stop to this.

And I think — and I also want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that before the back-benchers allow this Conservative government to continue on this path, they should wait for the results of the two by-elections that are going to be

called in the future.

And I say to the members opposite, go out and campaign on privatization. Use that in your platform on those two by-elections. Go out and campaign on the drug program. Go out and campaign on the fact that you fired 423 dental nurses and therapists. And I say, you go out and campaign on that program. Go out and campaign on the rebate on your gasoline tax, one of the most confusing programs that has ever been implemented in this province, and it will get more confusing. You campaign on that.

And I say call those two by-elections and we'll find out what the results are. And I'm sure that the private members, especially the member from Wilkie who is campaigning in both of those constituencies, and I ask him to go door to door and tell the folks what you have done and what you plan to do, and let's just see what the results are.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Conservative ideology is tearing down this province. It's tearing down the fabric that holds us together, and that is the family. It is literally destroying them.

And I ask you in closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you and to the back-benchers, to stand up. Don't allow this to happen. And fight back.

And, Mr. Speaker, with that I want to indicate to you that I will not be supporting the main motion.

Mr. Goulet: — Yes, I would take leave of the House to introduce some guests at the Speaker's gallery.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure to introduce students, grade 12 students, 23 grade 12 students from the North Battleford area with their teacher, Ken Trainberg; counsellors from the area, Merlin Kam, Reg Buglar, Rosalena Atchynum, Carmen Blackstar, and Jeannie Blackstar.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words with due respect to the languages of this province, especially the Indian languages of this province, and say it in my own language, of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Cree.

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

Mr. Goulet: — So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to also say that at 4:30 I will be meeting with the students in the members' dining room.

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 and the amendment thereto moved by Ms. Simard.

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is an honour to enter this debate on the motion very ably moved by the member from Rosthern and seconded by the member from Moosomin, thanking His Honour the Lieutenant Governor the for throne speech presented to us.

As you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have the privilege of serving as the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Education. Because of that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was especially pleased with the continued commitment that the government has demonstrated to education in this province and the high priority awarded to education in the Speech from the Throne. One concrete example of this government's commitment to education is the creation of a world-class technical education system embodied in Saskatchewan Institute of applied Science and Technology.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the opposition has said on a number of occasions that there has been a cut-back in the number of seats in the province's technical institutes. I would like to take the time, therefore, to provide the members opposite with the facts: a quick education, if you will, about the status of technical education in this province, particularly as it concerns accessibility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facts are that this year there are 5,000 more students attending a technical institute than there was in 1982 — 5,000 more students, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Now I don't know how they do math in the NDP ranks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but in Canora an increase of 5,000 just does not translate into a cut-back.

The government constructed a new world-class facility in Prince Albert, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a technical institute that is the pride of the North. The government has built a significant expansion for the Wascana institute, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government has provided financial assistance to six times as many students as the previous administration. That is a 600 per cent increase, Mr. Deputy Speaker — 600 per cent.

So I hope the members across the way will take these very impressive numbers into account when they debate Education in this House.

While we are on accessibility, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is important to note that there are also 5,000 more students attending university in this province than was the case under the previous administration. For the members opposite, I might add, it's 5,000 plus 5,000 equals 10,000. That is 10,000 more students in the post-secondary education system than the opposition was able to provide for. And I congratulate the Minister of Education, I congratulate him and the government for this very significant accomplishment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government's performance in

the field of education is envied by other governments. We have spent more per capita than any of the western provinces, even in a time when our economy has been the most severely affected.

The government has proceeded with the core curriculum and has had simply marvellous co-operation from all people involved in education in designing that curriculum. I want to say how impressive the commitment to consultation and public involvement that process was. Every group, Mr. Deputy Speaker, every group — teachers, parents, trustees, superintendents, academics, and the public at large were consulted in a very direct and comprehensive way. And when the broad outlines for the curriculum were set, classroom teachers, not high-priced bureaucrats but teachers from the classroom were given the lead role in developing the details of the curriculum.

It is a major achievement for which credit is due both to the Minister of Energy who is the former minister of Education, and the present Minister of Education. It is, in my view, a major accomplishment of the people of this province because it genuinely involved the whole province. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this kind of consultation is very much the mark of the government.

We heard in the Speech from the Throne how the government will pursue that kind of commitment in health care. A task force is to be appointed that will have a mandate even broader, I suspect, than the one that dealt with the core.

And I want to again thank the government for the initiatives it has taken, that it has undertaken in the constituency of Canora — initiatives like the addition to Gateway Lodge, our nursing home in Invermay, an addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the member from Riversdale says should not have happened; initiatives like the integrated health care facility at Theodore valued at two and one-half million dollars, a facility that the Leader of the Opposition has said should not exist; the initiatives, Mr. Deputy Speaker, like the seniors' apartment in Lintlaw, the development at Good Spirit with the grants, the funding, the agricultural supports, the protections such as the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and the many other very significant happenings in Canora and around the province.

I would like to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as well as the members of the Assembly, of three events that have happened in my constituency. And the member from Athabasca suggested that this government was not looking after rural Saskatchewan. Well let me give you three examples. I attended a school opening at Lintlaw, total costs — this was on March 10, 1988 — total cost: \$798,612. I'm going to have the honour and pleasure of attending the opening of the Sturgis Composite High School addition on April 19, 1988 — the cost of \$1,368,886; Endeavour School to follow that — \$710,940. Mr. Deputy Speaker, not one of these communities has a population of over 700. To me that is a sign of commitment by this government, both to education and rural Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1615)

Mr. Kopelchuk: — And I do express my gratitude for these things, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to briefly address the determination of this government that farm families shall be ensured the protection and support that they are entitled to. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and every person connected with agriculture knows — that when this province began in 1905, farm issues were the number one priority of the government. And then what happened was, as urban areas developed more and more and powerful interest groups started to take more of the attention of government, it got to the point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when in 1982 we had a government in Regina that didn't know a farm from a sanitary landfill; and one in Ottawa that asked, why should we sell your wheat? It had degenerated to the point that not only was there a lack of policy for farm families, but there was a lack of respect.

And then things changed. We elected a government in Regina and, in 1984, one in Ottawa that had in their ranks many farmers — governments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that had an understanding of farm families because they came from farm families; a Premier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who is a farmer.

And what has been the result? Billions of dollars in direct financial support: The special Canadian grains program, Mr. Deputy Speaker; the deficiency payment — the credit for which even the NDP gives to the Premier and his determination to do the best for Saskatchewan; the western grains stabilization payments, the largest pay-outs in history — and a government that absorbs the debt of that fund so farm families retain a measure of security; an expanded crop insurance program, Mr. Deputy Speaker, expanded so that 63 million more dollars of coverage payments have been made.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is in place in this province, and federally, due in very large measure to our Premier, a set of policies that provides the strongest support and the greatest commitment to farm families since 1905 when Saskatchewan became a province. And it is true, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that not all the challenges have been met. We still must cope with that serious debt program facing our farmers.

But let's take a look, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the solutions rehearsed by the member from Saskatoon South on Thursday, last week. He quoted extensively from an article by Dale Eisler, and he pumped and he preened about the land bank, and that is his answer to the debt problem. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we may not have all the answers yet, and we may not have the perfect solutions, but we do know one thing: the farm families in Canora do not want the NDP's land bank, and that is not the solution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — We will address these challenges, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will address them seriously. We will address them in consultation with, and on the advice of

farm families. We will pursue the same commitment we have demonstrated over the past six years, a commitment of unquestioned support for rural Saskatchewan, and our commitment to listen.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have every intention of supporting the continued progress and the new initiative so needed in our changing world, and I thank the Lieutenant Governor, and I thank my friend from Rosthern for his fine motion. I will be proud to support that motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise in this Assembly to address some concerns that I have heard from people in Moose Jaw North, people across the province of Saskatchewan, to respond to this Speech from the Throne that is destined to go down in history as the mad dog speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is destined to be known as the mad dog speech because we find this Speech from the Throne presented to us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at a time in which Saskatchewan is in crisis.

Saskatchewan people are in crisis in a whole number of ways, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's been admitted by the government opposite that we have a health care crisis in the province of Saskatchewan and is there a single individual in this entire province who doesn't know that.

We know all across this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have a crisis facing family farms and family farmers who are looking only to be able to survive and that's the issue of the day, a crisis in the family farms.

We have a crisis of inflation here in the province and here in Saskatchewan. We are not blessed, not blessed, but cursed, with the highest rate of inflation in the entire country of Canada.

We have a crisis in taxation, Mr. Speaker. The crisis in taxation here in Saskatchewan. People know from their experience that we pay, as a matter of fact, the second highest rate of taxes in all of the country of Canada.

And we know as well, Mr. Speaker, that there is a crisis in the area of employment and employment security and people in Saskatchewan are feeling anything but secure in their opportunity to find meaningful, decent employment that pays decent wages, Mr. Speaker.

And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this Speech from the Throne that we heard last week is empty of specifics. It's been referred to before. We heard that there are all kinds of crises, but we heard very little, very little by way of solutions.

I've referred to the speech. It was one of mush, and certainly it is that, certainly it is that, just pure mush, empty of plans and any kind of optimism or confidence in the future of this province, in the future of the people of Saskatchewan.

And truly, this speech that we heard, truly this speech that we heard, Mr. Speaker, if anything that can be said about

it at all, it must be said that it is a sure sign that the Government of Saskatchewan has gone to the dogs. It has gone to the dogs.

And I suggest that through this empty rhetorical Speech from the Throne, this government has admitted that it's in the doghouse with the people of Saskatchewan, a government in the doghouse with the people of Saskatchewan. And I suggest as well, Mr. Speaker, that with the blind ideological faith that was enunciated in this Speech from the Throne, the blind ideological faith that the cure for all that ails us lies in the Mulroney-Reagan deal and privatization — piratization — with a blind ideological faith that was outlined by the government in those two manoeuvres — the Mulroney-Reagan free trade deal and piratization — that this government has admitted to the people of Saskatchewan, that it is barking up the wrong tree. And the people of Saskatchewan will clearly be of the opinion that this government is barking up the wrong tree.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I will deal with piratization in a moment. But first I'd like to make some remarks related to this government and its plans, or lack of plans, related to employment and labour in the province of Saskatchewan today.

When we take a look at the employment scene in Saskatchewan, what do we see? We see a sad state of affairs, Mr. Speaker. When I refer to the February Saskatchewan labour market report published by the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, what does it tell us? Well it tells us, Mr. Speaker, simply this: that in February of this year, the last month for which there are statistics, in Saskatoon, in the entire city of Saskatoon, one out of every eight people is looking for work — one out of eight.

And that same report, Mr. Speaker, tells us that in February of this year, in the province of Saskatchewan, 15- to 24-year-olds, the young people of this province, Mr. Speaker, 15.2 per cent are unemployed, or nearly one out of every six young persons between the age of 15 and 24 in the province of Saskatchewan is looking for work. What a sad statement, Mr. Speaker, about the record of employment creation of the government of the day.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we will all remember, all of us in this House — and it was to the embarrassment of the members opposite — will remember the release of a report earlier this year, in January, a report that was produced by this government and which told us, Mr. Speaker, the sad state of affairs that faces this province if this government's current plans and actions are allowed to continue. The report by this government, Mr. Speaker, forecasts that over the next seven years literally 87,000 people will be leaving the province of Saskatchewan — will be leaving the province of Saskatchewan.

Now if the past has been any indication . . . Mr. Speaker, we know that in 1987, of those people who left this province, literally two-thirds, two out of every three who left this province, were 29 years old or younger.

And so, Mr. Speaker, what is there for the future of the people of Saskatchewan, for the optimism of this

province, when we're losing our young people, our people with the greatest amount of energy and talent and drive and determination? And this government opposite is forcing them to leave the province to look for work, and I say that is a condemning statement of their record in the province of Saskatchewan.

So what's the plan? What's the plan? What is the plan . . .

An Hon. Member: This is the biggest bunch of hogwash I've ever heard in my life.

Mr. Hagel: — The Minister of Education, he sits in his seat and he says this is hogwash. He sits and says this is hogwash. Have we heard the Minister of Education stand in this Assembly and give any indication or insist that in the Speech from the Throne there shall be a plan to provide for employment for the students in this province this summer? No, we haven't.

Have we heard the Minister of Education, or any of his colleagues, imply or give innuendoes or suggest or even comprehend that there is a need in this province for a summer employment program of any sort? And the answer, Mr. Speaker, I'm sad to say, is that in this mushy Speech from the Throne that we heard last week, not a single indication, not one iota of hope, is offered to the young people and to the students who are attending universities and technical schools and high schools and community colleges in the province of Saskatchewan — not one indication of hope that their government is listening to their concerns and cares enough to undertake initiatives to provide employment opportunities in the province of Saskatchewan. And what a sad, what a sad statement about their record in employment and their concern for those who are unemployed and underemployed in the province of Saskatchewan today.

So what are we told? What are we told? What reference does this government make in the Speech from the Throne to the plans for creation of employment and employment opportunity for the people of Saskatchewan?

We're told and I quote, Mr. Speaker, "that we will continue to diversify." Continue to diversify. The Minister of Education says, hear, hear. What is he saying, Mr. Speaker? He is saying that the plan for this government to create employment opportunities is the same old, sad, sorry plan that we have seen over the past five years, a plan that has been nothing but failure, and all they're offering for the young people of the province of Saskatchewan is more of the same, more of the same.

And what are we told? What are we told? What's the implications in the Speech from the Throne? The implications in the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, are that the plan involves a blind faith in the Mulroney-Reagan free trade deal, and an attachment to this whole blind ideological concept of privatization, and that the people of Saskatchewan should pin their hopes to those plans. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that that is not good enough, and when given the opportunity, the people of Saskatoon Eastview and the people of Regina Elphinstone will tell this government that its record is not good enough, and it's a message that they won't be able to

avoid.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, people in Saskatchewan, young working families in the province of Saskatchewan are looking for two things: they're looking for hope and opportunity. They're concerned about security, employment security in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And those who belong to a union, who are organized employees in the province of Saskatchewan, are not asking this government for the insecurity that comes with government reorganization — and we've been told that there will be more of that — that comes with government reorganization that literally wipes out their legal right to protection to keep their union representation, legal protection that is guaranteed by law for the people of Saskatchewan and yet denied in the reorganization that involves the Saskatchewan Water Corporation, and the combination of technical institutes and community colleges to form the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology. People, employees with union representation denied the right to the continued representation that is guaranteed by law in Saskatchewan simply because, with the stroke of a pen, this government has chosen to deny him that right.

(1630)

Full-time employees as well, Mr. Speaker, in this province of Saskatchewan, they're not asking for insecurity either. They're not asking for the insecurity that comes with the increasing tendency that we're seeing in Saskatchewan today to move away from full-time employment and into part-time employment. And I'll be watching, Mr. Speaker, I'll be watching very carefully the proposed changes to the labour standards affecting part-time workers, and I will view with an open mind and a fair mind, Mr. Speaker.

It may be that I will be able to find myself supporting the proposals made by the government if, as a matter of fact, the proposals do result in improved standards, labour standards, for part-time employees in the province of Saskatchewan, but I must admit to a little caution. I must admit to a little caution, Mr. Speaker, because I know that the shift to part-time employment in the province of Saskatchewan is an agenda that is "Taylor-made"; it is Taylor-made for those whose agenda involves the interests in the Mulroney-Reagan free trade deal and privatization. And I think we have to be very, very careful, Mr. Speaker, in this province of Saskatchewan of ours, whether we're promoting a society in which we have more and more young families struggling to make ends meet because there just isn't full-time work available.

Well I'm concerned as well, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about labour standards, about the job that the labour standards branch of the Human Resources, Labour and Employment Department is taking in the job that it's doing, and how seriously it's taking its job. And I make simple reference, Mr. Speaker, to some statistics of the last two years. Now I note with a quick review, Mr. Speaker, that in 1986 formal complaints for violation of

labour standards in the province of Saskatchewan involved 2,680 cases. Forty-two of those led to prosecutions.

Mr. Speaker, in 1987, last year, that number had increased by 17 per cent, where there were 3,135 complaints brought to the labour standards branch — an increase of 17 per cent. But what happened to prosecutions? Were they the same? Did they go up by 17 per cent? Mr. Speaker, I'm sad to report that prosecutions dropped by 52 per cent, from 42 to 20. And so in 1987, as compared to 1986, 17 per cent more complaints brought to the labour standards branch, but 52 per cent fewer prosecutions.

And one has to ask, Mr. Speaker, just how effectively the labour standards branch is doing its job to protect the right of workers in this province, the vast majority of whom obviously will be people who are not unionized, who are not organized, who are not protected by a collective agreement. That doesn't speak well for the security that Saskatchewan people are looking for when they're concerned about employment.

I'm concerned as well, Mr. Speaker, that we have a government that likes to point today's loss through work stoppage as a problem which needs to be dealt with, often time, I believe, a reason for hammering the rights of working people who are organized with union representation.

And let me point out, Mr. Speaker, that the real issue, if a government is concerned about days lost, the real issue is not work stoppages. And let me again, Mr. Speaker, take a quick review of the last five years, although I don't have part of the statistics for 1987 — I wasn't able to get them by today. But let's just take a look very quickly, Mr. Speaker, taking a comparison, because all employees and employers will be concerned about days lost from the job — that's neither in the best interest of employees or employers.

And we take a quick look at the record, Mr. Speaker, what do we see? In 1983 there were 598,536 jobs . . . sorry, 598,536 days lost due to workers' compensation injuries. These are jobs that are covered by workers' comp . . . these are days lost covered by workers' compensation, Mr. Speaker. Work stoppage in the same year, 1983: 28,800 days lost, Mr. Speaker, in 1983 there were 21 times as many days lost due to injury as there were days lost due to work stoppage.

In 1984, 622,034 days lost due to compensatable injury: 12,231 to work stoppage. In 1984, literally 50 times as many days lost due to work injury as lost by work stoppage.

In 1985, Mr. Speaker, 573,403 days lost due to injury on the jobs; 56,659 lost to work stoppage — 10 times as many days lost to injury as to work stoppage. and in 1986, the last year, Mr. Speaker, for which I've been able to get both numbers: 470,254 days lost due to injury on the job, compensatable injury, 131,249 to work stoppage, and four times as many days lost through injury as work stoppage.

Now clearly, Mr. Speaker, the numbers are different each year and the comparisons is different each year. But clearly, Mr. Speaker, there is a consistent pattern here that tells us that if this government is truly interested in dealing with days lost on the job, if it's serious, it will focus its efforts on the occupational health and safety of workers in Saskatchewan, because that's where the mileage will be made for both employees and employers in Saskatchewan.

But what do we see, Mr. Speaker, when I review the record of this government and its commitment to occupational health and safety where their greatest amount of potential to recover lost work days in the province of Saskatchewan for employers and employees? What do we see? In 1981-82, occupational health and safety in the last year of the Blakeney government, the budget was \$1.7 million, with 47 staff members. Last year, Mr. Speaker, in the year that we're just about to conclude — \$2.1 million in funds, and staff are down to 39. And when we compare those, Mr. Speaker, what we see is that in occupational health and safety, this government has cut eight staff positions, and there has been a real budget cut when you take inflation into consideration — a real budget cut of about \$200,000. And I say, Mr. Speaker, we have to question the credibility and the commitment of this government to deal with the real issues facing employees and employers and protecting both of those — both of those — groups from lost days on the work site.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I said before that I would like to make some comments today about "piratization," and let me turn to that topic now, Mr. Speaker. You will know, Mr. Speaker, as will the people of Saskatchewan, that in January of this year the Premier of this province advised the people of Saskatchewan that we were going to have yet another first — yet another first, and don't we seem to have a large number of those these days? — yet another first.

We are going to be the first jurisdiction in the country of Canada to be — I was going to say blessed, I would suggest cursed, with a Department of Public Participation. You almost have to choke when you say the word, public participation, because not even all the members opposite can say the phrase with a straight face. Not all the members opposite can even say it with a straight face.

And we were informed, we were given notice — we were given notice that the people of Saskatchewan are about to become . . . to continue to become the victims of a pure right-wing ideology, a process inspired by Maggie Thatcher's right-hand man, Madsen Pirie. And what does he have to say about the management of public affairs, Mr. Speaker. He says that governments should get rid of all Crown corporations at any cost. And we have the minister of piratization today informing this Legislative Assembly that we're busy doing that.

Madsen Pirie also says, Mr. Speaker, that without exception, without exception, there is nothing the public sector can do as well as the private sector. Without exception. There's no sense at all, Mr. Speaker, of co-operation between the public and the private sector

working together. No sense at all of that. It's pure right-wing, blind ideology, motivated by the guru who was chosen by Maggie Thatcher to be her consultant in Great Britain. And it's a process in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that has been inspired by Madsen Pirie, but been directed and consulted and recommended by the Fraser Institute in Vancouver.

The Fraser Institute in Vancouver, Mr. Speaker, which lists as one of its members of the board of directors, P.H. Pocklington. Now I wonder who that can be. Could that be old Peter Pocklington, as he's better known in the province of Saskatchewan? That great bastion of free enterprise who is not adverse to wander into the province of Saskatchewan with his hand held out firmly and taking \$22 million of the taxpayers' money in the province of Saskatchewan, part of the team of advisers who are telling this government, Mr. Speaker, how to engage in privatization.

And Saskatchewan people have been served notice, Mr. Speaker, been served notice that this blind, ideological process will be continuing, a process that is Taylor-made — Taylor-made in Saskatchewan; a blind, ideological process Taylor-made for contracting out and patronage; a process in the province of Saskatchewan, a blind, ideological process that will be Taylor-made, Mr. Speaker, for free trade, deregulation, and user fees; a blind, ideological process that is Taylor-made for big business and out-of-province interests; a blind, ideological process, Mr. Speaker, Taylor-made, Taylor-made for lower wages and job insecurity and union bashing; a blind, ideological process Taylor-made for cut-backs in service, and particularly cut-backs in rural Saskatchewan; a blind, ideological process, Taylor-made for the selling off and the giving away of the province of Saskatchewan.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that if we are going to call this process what it really is, we will not call it privatization, and we will surely not call it public participation. If we call this process what it really is, Mr. Speaker, we will call it privatization, because privatization is what is going on in the province of Saskatchewan today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the pirates of the PC Party are plundering the very future of Saskatchewan, and that's privatization, pure and simple, without a doubt.

Well, Mr. Speaker, every government has to ask itself what it's doing, and this one will do that on occasion too. And when a government asks itself why it's going to do whatever its plans are, be they policy or programs or whatever, it has to ask one question, Mr. Speaker, and the people of this province should judge the government in response of that question.

And the question is this: with these changes that are being made, whatever they are, which people in the province of Saskatchewan will have more power as a result of that to control their fates and their futures and their own destinies, and which people, Mr. Speaker, will have less? We could summarize that by saying, who are the winners and who are the losers? Another way of asking the same

question.

And when the Government of Saskatchewan is dealing with program and policy changes, Mr. Speaker, it has to ask another question: will these changes improve or reduce the ability of Saskatchewan people to solve Saskatchewan problems in Saskatchewan?

Well let's take a look, Mr. Speaker. Let's take a look at the record of privatization that this government has engaged in already. And I ask the people of Saskatchewan to judge for themselves: who are the winners and who are the losers, and have they resulted in the ability of Saskatchewan people to better solve or less able to solve the problems that they're facing within the province of Saskatchewan?

Let's go back, Mr. Speaker, to the Department of Highways back in 1983 and '84. That's when privatization began in the province of Saskatchewan. We'll remember literally hundreds of highway workers in the province of Saskatchewan being fired; in the words of the minister of Highways of the day, being transferred to the private sector. Remember that, Mr. Speaker? We remember that. And then as a result of that, as a result of this announcement made by the minister of Highways, the minister who spent the entire huge PC cabinet . . . the largest number of dollars every year on airplane flights because he knew what kind of shape the highways are in in Saskatchewan — what happened as a result of his decision to privatize the highways?

First of all, we auctioned off \$40 million worth of highway equipment for \$6 million — fire sale prices. And then what little highway construction work was being done was contracted out and usually to out-of-province firms, and often to out-of-province employees, both of whom went back home and paid their income tax.

And what has highway maintenance come down to in the province of Saskatchewan? Mr. Speaker, I suggest that highway maintenance in the province of Saskatchewan has come down to this: it's come down to getting in the back of a pick-up truck with some red flags and trotting around the roads of this province sticking those flags beside the pot-holes and the soft spots and the humps and the hollows. And people in Saskatchewan are saying to me, if this government believed in honesty in advertising, it would take down the signs that say, "Lights on for Life" and put up new signs that read, "Hang on for life" when you're riding on the roads in Saskatchewan.

(1645)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Privatization. Privatization of our highways, Mr. Speaker, and I ask who are the winners and who are the losers?

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've seen privatization in the Prince Albert Pulp Company, PAPCO, with the so-called sale to Weyerhaeuser — an asset valued by most people, commonly considered to be worth more than \$300 million, "sold" for \$248 million. Most would suggest, given away, Mr. Speaker, because the arrangements for

that deal, for that sale, are that over a 30-year period, with a low interest arrangement, that Weyerhaeuser need only pay, need only pay to the Government of Saskatchewan for that asset in those years in which it has a profit over the industry standard. And I say, Mr. Speaker, you show me an accountant who cannot prove that his company is making less profit than industry standard, and I will show you an accountant who's looking for a job. Piratization of PAPCO — piratization of PAPCO — and I ask again, Mr. Speaker, who are the winners and who are the losers?

We've seen piratization of Saskoil, the Crown-owned corporation that returned funds to the Consolidated Fund of the Government of Saskatchewan every year. Three years ago, Mr. Speaker, shares were sold to Saskoil, put on the public market, and what's happened since? In the years later, of that first sale of shares to Saskoil, over three out of every four shares are now owned outside the province of Saskatchewan, and the Government of Saskatchewan no longer even has a majority control of Saskoil. And I ask again, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the piratization of Saskoil, who are the winners and who are the losers; and are Saskatchewan people better off or worse off at being able to solve our financial problems within the province of Saskatchewan?

Let's take a look at another couple of examples of piratization, Mr. Speaker. Let's take a look at the children's dental care program and the prescription drug plan. On July 1, 1987 in the province of Saskatchewan we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the introduction of one of Saskatchewan's most beautiful gifts to the people of Canada. We celebrated the 25th anniversary of medicare. And how did we celebrate? How did we celebrate medicare in the eyes of the government opposite? We celebrated medicare in two ways: by piratizing the children's dental care program and by piratizing the prescription drug program in Saskatchewan.

The school-based program that existed in this province was one of the best darn examples of preventive health care in the history of the world, Mr. Speaker. It was consistent with the dreams of Tommy Douglas and others who fought to bring medicare to the province of Saskatchewan, a dream that hospital care and medicare would eventually result in preventive health care system, and the dental care program was the best example in the existence of health care today of preventive health care working.

It was getting cheaper every year, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the fact that we had inflation, because kids in Saskatchewan were growing up with good teeth, growing up with good teeth being cared for by professionals who knew how to deal with kids, because they were trained to do that.

My kids were enrolled in that program, Mr. Speaker, and they came home from a visit with the dental therapist with happy faces and committed to brushing teeth and taking good care of their teeth. And kids were happy to see the dental therapist.

I don't know about you, Mr. Speaker, but when I grew up,

a trip to the dentist was not the highlight of my life, nor is it the highlight of the life of a lot of other people. But we had highly qualified, professionally trained people to deal with kids, providing an excellent program of preventive dental care — piratized, taken out of 338 communities in the province of Saskatchewan. Now you only get it in 75.

Somehow, Mr. Speaker, this piratization, this piratization of the children's dental care program is an improvement, we're told. Well, Mr. Speaker, if you're having a little difficulty following the logic of the government in this one, we're in this together. We're in this together.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, in the piratization of the children's dental care program, who were the winners and who were the losers? And I wonder when the Minister of Health, who told us that we have a 40 per cent participation rate in the new dental care program for kids, I wonder when he's going to find that dentist who's been wandering some long, lonely, lost highway looking for the community of Gravelbourg?

Let's take a look as well, Mr. Speaker, at the piratization of the prescription drug plan. The prescription drug plan — piratization of the prescription drug plan. We had one of the best, if not the best, in the entire country before — an example of what Allan Blakeney, Mr. Speaker, would call in his special way, socialized medicine. I always loved the way Allan Blakeney would describe it as socialized medicine.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, our Premier came along in Saskatchewan; he said, we've got to change this program because it's being abused. And I ask, who's abusing it? Did the Premier of Saskatchewan go to the doctors of Saskatchewan and say, oh you're abusing this program, you're going to have to change your ways? No, we never heard that. So we have to ask, who's abusing this program?

And I wonder, Mr. Speaker, is the Premier of Saskatchewan suggesting that all across the province of Saskatchewan there are bands of renegade senior citizens sweeping across the province, breaking into doctors' offices, stealing prescription pads, and going down and getting hooked on drugs? Is that what he's saying? Is that what he's saying?

Well we had until July 1 this strange example of socialized medicine, and people in Saskatchewan went through a ritual, Mr. Speaker. People in Saskatchewan's prescription drug plan would go through a ritual of socialized medicine. They'd get sick, they'd go to the doctor, the doctor would give them a prescription, they'd take \$3.95 or less, they'd go to their pharmacist, they'd take their medicine home, and they'd get better. What a strange notion of socialized medicine! You get sick, you go to your doctor, you get a prescription, you take \$3.95 or less, you go to the pharmacist, you get your medicine, you go home and take it, and you get better.

But the Premier of Saskatchewan told us, no, there's nothing like socialized medicine that can't be improved by piratizing it. And now, Mr. Speaker, we've got a new ritual. We've got the ritual or piratized prescription drug plan in Saskatchewan. People get sick, they go to the

doctor, they get their prescription, and then they go to the bank — or they wait till the end of the month.

Or worst of all, Mr. Speaker, worst of all, maybe they don't even go to the pharmacist to get the medicine to take home and get better. Is there any one of us here who has not had reports and personally seen young mothers and senior citizens in the province of Saskatchewan walk into a pharmacy with a prescription, hand it to the pharmacist, and when told how much it would cost, turn and walk out because they didn't have the money to afford it?

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the privatization of the prescription drug plan is a thin edge of the wedge, a move towards private health care insurance, a move towards user pay. And I have to ask, when it comes to the privatization of the prescription drug plan, who are the winners and who are the losers?

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the privatization of SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), and the greatest criticism I have about the privatization of SGI is not what it's done, but what it hasn't done. We have a need in this province for affordable liability insurance. It's a need that is felt by municipalities and hospitals and school boards and businesses and organizations across the province.

And what has this government directed SGI, Saskatchewan Government Insurance, to do? Nothing — nothing! Why are people in Saskatchewan faced with high liability, unaffordable liability costs? Because of the Saskatchewan experience in the court? No — not even the Canadian experience, because of the costs of settlements in the United States and across the world.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this government opposite intentionally directed SGI not to get into the business of providing affordable liability insurance for Saskatchewan people based on the Saskatchewan experience because they know when you're committed to a blind ideological process and you do something that people consider to be right and fair and just, that they won't let you sell off the solution. What a shame! And I ask again, Mr. Speaker: when it comes to the privatization of SGI, who are the winners and who are the losers?

Well, Mr. Speaker, we see referred in the house today for the Minister of privatization, the privatization of Sask Minerals, a nifty little Crown corporation that's been around for 40 years and paid some \$61 million in wages and about \$50 million to the people of Saskatchewan; a leader in research and in the industry over those years; a good employer that paid decent wages and decent benefits and provided stable employment; that would stockpile in down times to ensure that employees and their communities were protected against the rises and falls in the industry — a good, steady employer and a good Crown corporation corporate citizen being sold off today, without opportunity for the employees to participate. And I ask again, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the privatization of Sask Minerals, who are the winners and who are the losers?

You know, Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to . . . have to reflect back to Thursday. It seems to me that there was a meeting

out in Chaplin, Saskatchewan at which the minister of privatization went out and he said, I'm coming out to consult, coming out to consult, and the way I consult is to tell you it's going to be sold within a few days.

And when asked by the employees whether he would give the same deal to the employees of Sask Mineral that he gave to Weyerhaeuser, he refused to answer. He refused to answer, Mr. Speaker, this same Minister of Public Participation who refuses to go on talk shows in Saskatchewan. And I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Public Participation is refusing to participate publicly in the province of Saskatchewan, and that's privatization as well.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the examples go on for ever and ever, and it seems that there is no end to the list.

Let me deal finally, Mr. Speaker, with one more example, the privatization of office space. Now the minister responsible for Saskatchewan Power Corporation will have some special feelings about this one. We had a chance to discuss in question period today just how much sense it makes to take the Saskatchewan Power building in the city of Moose Jaw and pay more to rent half of the building that it costs to operate the whole building that they owned. Now, strange little notion, Mr. Speaker, that somehow this is in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan and power users.

We also have an example across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We have in Saskatchewan today the sad state of affairs that means that in the province of Saskatchewan the government has committed itself and pays every day \$34,000 — every day — of taxpayers' money for government office space that's not being used — \$34,000 a day of taxpayers' money for empty office space as a commitment to the private sector that somehow will offer these deals that we're told provide a more efficient use of public space and public dollars. And I ask you, Mr. Speaker — if this is not clear to you, again, we're in this together — how spending \$34,000 a day of taxpayers' money for empty office space is in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan?

So when we take about the privatization of office space, again I ask: who are the winners and who are the losers in the province of Saskatchewan?

Well, Mr. Speaker, when I look at the Speech from the Throne it looks as though it comes from a government that's dog-tired and dog-eared and gone to the dogs, barking up the wrong tree, and having a little trouble keeping itself on a short leash at times, Mr. Speaker. A speech full of mush and devoid of promises and commitments and plans to improve the lot of the life of Saskatchewan people.

And so when I stand, Mr. Speaker, in this House to respond to that Speech from the Throne, I am sad to say that I cannot support, I cannot support this mushy lack of plans that was put forth last Monday and proposed by the government opposite. I cannot do that and I will look with keen interest, Mr. Speaker, at those opposite to see how they stand when it comes to supporting this mushy

objective that was put forth last Monday.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against the motion and I will be voting for the amendment which expresses regrets that the provincial government has betrayed Saskatchewan's families by its attacks on medicare, its failure to support Saskatchewan farmers in financial crisis, its unfair tax policies, and its failure provide jobs and opportunities for Saskatchewan young people. Mr. Speaker, those are the things I believe in; those are the things that are important to Saskatchewan people today. I will be voting for the amendment and against the motion.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.