

## EVENING SITTING

## SPECIAL ORDER

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE  
BUDGET DEBATE

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Lane that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to continue on with a short summary of what I had been speaking about just before 5 o'clock. And if you will recall, Mr. Speaker, I was chatting about the changes in the transportation system across the country of Canada that have come about over the time period of this administration.

And I spoke specifically, Mr. Speaker, of three major significant changes in the transportation sector. And that was, number one, national re-regulation or deregulation, if you like, of the trucking industry. The second thing that I was speaking of, Mr. Speaker, was a national safety code for our trucking industry that will be uniform right across the whole country of Canada. And the third item, Mr. Speaker, was a national set of uniform weights and dimensions across the country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the significance here is great. And, Mr. Speaker, I say the significance is not only great to the trucking industry or to the shippers, but the significance here is great to all of the public of Saskatchewan. And what we're talking about, Mr. Speaker, is with a less regulated environment in the transport industry, you will see there is more competition in the trucking industry or the transportation sector, and as a result the costs of products to consumers across this country will be lessened.

When you have a national safety code, Mr. Speaker, the safety of the travelling public across the entire country is greatly enhanced by a national safety code. And for the last few years we've been enhanced by a national safety code. And for the last few years we've been working very, very hard to come up with a national safety code, and it in itself is indeed a milestone in this country.

The third one, Mr. Speaker, national uniform weights and dimensions, will provide further efficiencies to the transport sector so that consumers once again, in effect, will be paying less money for their goods.

And, Mr. Speaker, I once again want to say how very, very proud I am to have played a major role, I feel, in the development of these three initiatives, to have been a major part of these changes during my period of office. And, Mr. Speaker, these changes that I speak of, I think, are the most significant changes that have taken place in the transport industry probably in many, many decades.

And once again, Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to my colleagues all across this country and to the federal

government for the co-operative way with which we have worked on these three proposals. And, Mr. Speaker, the public of Saskatchewan, I know, are very, very much in agreement with what we have done in these three sectors.

Another positive contribution that Highways and Transportation is making, Mr. Speaker, involves the development of transportation technology. The economy of Saskatchewan depends upon our motor carrier industry providing essential services for a multitude of commodities. And as I mentioned earlier, we have unusually high transportation costs due to our geographic location here in Saskatchewan. This results, of course, in our highway system transporting . . . about 40 per cent of the commodities that we produce here in Saskatchewan are transported by or on our highway system.

We have made great strides toward a less regulated, a more streamlined motor carrier industry in Saskatchewan and across the country. But we need to go one step further, and Mr. Speaker, this budget does provide for that. Highways and Transportation has been working closely with trailer manufacturers and carriers in the development of safer and more efficient transportation equipment under the department's transportation technology development program. The objective of this program is to provide financial assistance to the development of transportation equipment that will achieve at least one and preferably all of the following: improve the highway system, extending the life of the highway system, and reducing direct transportation costs.

Mr. Speaker, we have conducted three major demonstration projects, and to date, the results of those demonstration projects have been very, very promising. One of these projects has enabled payloads to increase by 48 per cent and at the same time not increase any pavement damage. Now, Mr. Speaker, it's very easy to see the economics of increasing a payload by almost 50 per cent and at the same time doing no more damage to the pavement structures that we have. And these kinds of results, Mr. Speaker, once again are translated into direct savings to the shippers and in turn direct savings to the consumers. And, Mr. Speaker, this indeed is significant to all people in Saskatchewan.

With these kinds of results, we are hopeful that in the near future a streamlined regulatory environment and a more efficient and a safe and less damaging equipment will be soon available in a bigger way than it is today. Just importantly, Mr. Speaker, we are taking an essential leadership role in developing and manufacturing this kind of technology right here in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — And, Mr. Speaker, when you develop and when you manufacture these types of equipment, that is all a part in diversifying the economy. And I say with a great deal of pride that Highways and Transportation is playing their role in helping to diversify the economy in Saskatchewan. In terms of less regulation and the development of safer transportation equipment, I believe that this government has made a very firm commitment to safety.

There are several other aspects of safety that must be reaffirmed and emphasized. And I am speaking now, Mr. Speaker, of the safety of the travelling public. During 1987 I am pleased to announce the traffic fatalities on our highway system decreased by 8.5 per cent.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Another area of concern, another area of safety that is of concern to this budget address, Mr. Speaker, is a program or a law — firstly a law — that you must slow to 60 kilometres while passing our highway workers. In 1987 Highways and Transportation conducted a major advertising campaign informing the travelling public of the dangers to highway workers if that speed limit is not followed. And I'm also pleased to announce, Mr. Speaker, that during 1987 no highway workers were involved in serious accidents. A survey following that showed motorists are most definitely following the law.

This campaign, Mr. Speaker, will definitely go ahead once again in 1988. And I hear the members of the opposition time and time again criticizing this government for its advertising policies. I cannot understand, Mr. Speaker, how members of the opposition could possibly criticize this administration for advertising — advertising that protects the lives of highway workers. Mr. Speaker, once again, I want to call on the travelling public in Saskatchewan to co-operate with this program to protect our highway workers, and I am very certain that the public will continue to follow this law.

Mr. Speaker, another thing along safety lines is the all-terrain vehicles Act that will be tabled shortly in this Saskatchewan legislature. This Bill respects the rights of the all-terrain vehicle operators, and at the same time, it provides the necessary protection that will ensure the safe and the enjoyable use of all-terrain vehicles.

These new initiatives combined with existing programs will serve to keep safety at the forefront and they will aid in our objective of lowering accidents and decreasing traffic fatalities. This new legislation will help to ensure the safe and proper use of these vehicles, but, Mr. Speaker, the government cannot assume all of the responsibility. Operators and parents and brothers and sisters will all have to co-operate and assume a good deal of this responsibility.

And, Mr. Speaker, once again, I'd like to pay tribute to my transportation caucus who has worked long and hard in developing this legislation. They have consulted extensively with different groups throughout Saskatchewan, and the legislation that we will be bringing forward, I am sure will meet with the approval of the people in Saskatchewan.

I do hope that the members of the opposition will carefully review this legislation when it is brought before this Assembly. I do hope that they will offer their comments and their advice in a true and honest and compassionate fashion. And I do hope, Mr. Speaker, that members of the opposition will for once leave the politics aside and look closely at this Bill and help us to bring this

Bill to the legislature and out to the people in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in summation, this Highways and Transportation budget of 1987-1988, I believe, is an historic one in many, many respects. I am so very, very proud to stand here today and announce the \$30 million enhanced highway rehabilitation program. This program will go a long, long ways to addressing our needs of our paved highway system and, Mr. Speaker, I do know that the people of Saskatchewan will meet this new program initiative with a great deal of enthusiasm.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Once again, Mr. Speaker, Highways and Transportation has undertaken these three initiatives that I have spoke earlier about, that are of national importance and of fundamental significance to the people of Saskatchewan. I'm just very, very pleased that I, in my career as a politician, am able to be here at a time when transportation is changing so very, very rapidly, and at a time when co-operation exists between our province and the other provinces in Canada and the federal government, to accomplish objectives like this.

Mr. Speaker, there are other areas in the budget that I could speak on at length. The budget, I feel, is a very, very good budget for the people of Saskatchewan. I was out visiting with my constituents on the weekend, and I know, Mr. Speaker, that the budget was well-received by the people of Saskatchewan.

I could talk, Mr. Speaker, for hours about the improvements to health care that we have made in this budget. Spending of \$104 million, increases have gone primarily to health and to education, and, Mr. Speaker, those are two very, very important subjects. I take a look at health care, Mr. Speaker, and I see the amount of moneys that are being expended in health care, some billion and a quarter dollars annually — more that \$1,250 per man, woman, and child in this whole province. And, Mr. Speaker, it upsets me to no end when I hear members of the opposition trying to scare the public in Saskatchewan that this administration is not spending the required amount on health care. And they say different things about health care, that we're not funding it enough and that we're doing this and we're doing that. Mr. Speaker, never in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker, have the public in Saskatchewan been more protected with health care.

Certainly it is a time for change, Mr. Speaker, and I was so pleased to hear the Minister of Health announce that there will be a task force that will be reviewing all of the priorities within health care. And, Mr. Speaker, when you are spending those kinds of dollars, when the health system is some 25 years old, I think that a review is probably quite warranted. But, Mr. Speaker, the public in Saskatchewan know full well that this government is committed, beyond a question of a doubt, to the health care of our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I could speak at length, Mr. Speaker, about things that are in the budget, but I'd like to

take just a minute or so and chat about some things that were noticeably absent from the budget, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if you go through that budget, I will guarantee you that you will not find in that budget any moneys dedicated to buying a potash mine. There wasn't a dime we spent on buying potash mines in this budget, Mr. Speaker. You take a look at it further, Mr. Speaker, and you'll not find a plug nickel there to buy uranium mines. You take a look at the budget, Mr. Speaker, and you will not find one red cent there to buy farm land, to speculate on the farm land in this province. You won't find a dime.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, you will not find any moneys in this budget to go out and do studies and investigate on how the government might be able to get into this business or that business.

And what brings to my mind when I speak of this, Mr. Speaker, is when I was a young man starting out in business, I recall the government of the day that was doing investigations — investigations into starting their own autobody shops, Mr. Speaker. And that's only one example that I, and many others, knew of. The question that I have is how many other studies were undertaken by the members of the NDP Party of what other business they might want to get into? What other businesses might they want to nationalize? What other businesses might they want to start up on their own?

But, Mr. Speaker, you will not find in this Progressive Conservative budget a plug nickel for any of those types of things. But what you will find, Mr. Speaker, is many, many millions of dollars dedicated to protecting the people of this province. I speak of moneys that are expended on health care; I speak of moneys that are expended on education. I speak of moneys that are expended on fundamental programs such as the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and the Saskatchewan income plan and on and on. Moneys that are going directly to the people in this province who need and require protection.

(1915)

Mr. Speaker, this is an exceptionally good budget. It is a budget that I am very proud to stand here and speak on. This budget has not been just drafted up off the cuff. This budget is the end product of countless hours of discussions amongst my colleagues, Mr. Speaker. And I would say that all of these, all of these suggestions put forth by the MLAs on this side of the House have been taken into consideration, and this is the culmination of many hours of thought, Mr. Speaker, it is not the culmination of any suggestions or concrete solutions put forth by the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, we are here to co-operate as a government. These are difficult times in Saskatchewan and these are times when it takes politicians on both sides of the House — takes politicians on both sides of the House — to stand up and put forth solutions to very difficult problems. We

have not seen any solutions put forward by the members of the NDP Party, Mr. Speaker. All we have seen is partisan politics for months and months and months — no solutions, Mr. Speaker, only ideas that come forth from the old days of the NDP, the old dark days of the NDP, Mr. Speaker. And the public of Saskatchewan spoke very loudly and clearly in April of 1982, and, Mr. Speaker, they spoke once again in October of 1986.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I look to the east from Saskatchewan, I look to the province of Manitoba, and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the public in Manitoba, as the public in Saskatchewan did in April of 1982 and October of 1986, will repeat that performance, and you will see a Progressive Conservative administration within a matter of probably 25 days in the province of Manitoba.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I will end my comments by saying that I whole-heartedly support this budget, I whole-heartedly support our Premier, and I believe that the constituents of Melfort, on behalf of whom I am here, will whole-heartedly as well support this budget and this administration. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter this budget debate, the second budget that's been delivered by this government since I was elected in 1986, and I'm pleased to speak on behalf of the constituents of Prince Albert-Duck Lake and other constituents of other members in this Legislature who don't perhaps happen to agree with the nattering and the whining of the member from Melfort.

I note he was indicating that he sees no discontent with this budget as he travels throughout the province and throughout his riding — reminds me of the ostrich, and I would suggest that this particular ostrich has had his head in the gravel pit, because if he was listening to what was happening out there, he would realize that there is in fact some discontent with the direction of this particular government.

He indicates no solutions from this side of the House. I would want to suggest and say, Mr. Speaker, that the best solution would be an end to this government's administration and the wrack and havoc that they've placed upon this province since 1982.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I wish to share some of the concerns of the people of this province about this budget and about this government's record because this government has been dishonest, it's been incompetent, and it hasn't been dealing with the concerns of the people of Saskatchewan. It's demonstrated a total lack of compassion, a lack of vision for the future, and I would suggest it is rapidly losing what little credibility it may have left.

The members opposite continually speak about fear being instilled in the people's minds from members on this side of the House. Well I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that certainly that's not our intention.

What we've been doing, and what we will continue to do, is speak for the families in this province and let this government know that they are concerned about the future of their families, the future of their neighbours, and the future of their children. And they're concerned as well about the future of this province we live in — the province of Saskatchewan.

Now as I said, we're not speaking to frighten people, but what we're doing is speaking for people who are already frightened by the mismanagement, the incompetence, and the lack of compassion that this government has shown.

And I'd like to say that members from this side of the House will be pointing out during this budget debate and into the estimates that there is a need for a change in the direction that this government is taking, there's a need for change in the way that they're doing things. People are well aware of what's happened in terms of health care and in terms of education, in terms of the millions and millions of dollars that this government squanders on empty office space and hiring its friends. People are well aware of those things.

As well, they're aware of the massive amount of dollars that we're going to have to put towards repairing the highways that have been neglected since 1982. And I wish the member was around to hear this, because I tell you, red flags and pot-holes are not what the people of this province are looking for. They're looking for the kind of a highway system that used to be in this province prior to this government's administration, where you didn't have to rattle your car apart to get from point A to point B.

And I want to say tonight, Mr. Speaker, over the months that I've spent in this legislature and the speeches that I've heard from this Premier and from the member from Weyburn, they fondly talk about moving into the year 2000 and beyond, and they talk about their vision. But nothing it's ever done in terms of creating the kind of a vision that the people of this province want to see in the year 2000 and beyond. And I'll tell you, there was another Tory premier in this province in the 1930s by the name of Anderson who apparently had a vision. And I'll tell you, it took the people of this province 50 years to forget that vision. And I would want to say today that when these people are turfed in 1990 or '91, it will take another 50 years for the people to forget the vision that these members had.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — And tonight, if I could take the liberty, maybe, Mr. Speaker, to look into the year 2010 or 2020 and maybe at what the people in those years are saying about this administration, like they say now about the Anderson government of the '30s. And what will they be saying, Mr. Speaker? What will they be saying of this government, the Premier and of his executive council and of the back-benchers who sit on their hands as the Premier destroys this province? What will they be saying?

What will they be saying about the election campaigns of 1982 and of 1986 that were proven to be lies by the kind

of government that they delivered? I tell you that those memories will continue for a long, long time and this government will never be forgotten.

What will the families of people who have been destroyed by this government say in the year 2010 or 2020? Will they speak in high esteem of the member of Weyburn or any of the other members on that side? I suggest to you not. We're going to look at a direct parallel to what they say about the Anderson regime of the '30s.

And what about those families who've been affected by this government in terms of losing family businesses that have operated in this province for decades and who have found themselves in a position that they've had to close the doors and move out of this province in order to make a living? What will those families be saying? Will they be speaking in glowing terms of this Premier, of this tear-everything-apart Premier? I say to you not.

And I'll say as well that the farms, the family farms that are being destroyed, that are being lost during this term of PC government, will not be speaking in glowing terms of this Premier or his cabinet or of the back-benchers that may have represented them. The pain that's inflicted on those families when they pack up their belongings and leave their farms will not be remembered fondly.

I want to say as well, Mr. Speaker, what will the people who parade their children to the food banks — the fastest-growing industry in this province — what will they say of these members in the year 2000 or 2010? Will there be a glowing report of how wonderful life was made for them under this administration? I would suggest to you there won't be.

And those that are affected by the destroyed health care programs that so much thought and so much care and so much attention was given in the 1970s and earlier, when those programs were being developed and being built . . . And people who have seen those programs destroyed — and I speak of the drug prescription plan and I speak as well of the children's dental plan — the families who saw those programs work and function and who saw them destroyed and torn apart bit by bit by this government, what will their report be of this Premier and of his cabinet and of his back-benchers? What will that report be? I would suggest to you it won't be a glowing report.

And what about the changes to the education system in Saskatchewan, the community colleges that have been destroyed and dismantled? And what about those who are affected by the massive unemployment and those who for the first time in their lives find themselves on social assistance because this province, the government of this province, hasn't created an environment where they can find work? I would suggest if the member for Weyburn is around in the year 2010 and 2020, he's not going to want to talk about those things as he does today. And if he was wise, he wouldn't be talking about them now.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that dreams have been denied Saskatchewan people, and hopes have been shattered. and I would ask the member from Rosthern and from Shellbrook-Torch River, and I guess especially the

member from Kinistino who indicated to his people in '86 that he was coming down here to clean up this mess, how are people going to look on their record in the 21st century.

When you look at the economic statistics that are around this province and you look at the number of unemployed people, it tells me that this government is on the wrong direction. And you can look at almost any indicator you want, whether it be housing starts, whether it be the number of people on social assistance, whether it be unemployment or whether it be the massive debt that these people, this government, has built. It would tell me that the people in the next century are not going to speak in glowing terms of this administration and of this Premier who led it. If you talk about retail sales, you'll find that we're not keeping up to the rest of the provinces in Canada.

You look at oil revenue, that these people have squandered billions of dollars where there were dollars that could have been rechannelled into the provincial economy, rechannelled into provincial coffers to create employment, to stop the massive deficit that they were building — seven consecutive deficit budgets. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, it's unforgivable what they've done.

Oil prices, for goodness' sakes, 10 years ago we were dealing with oil at less than nine bucks a barrel and there was no deficit in this province. Fifteen years ago we were dealing with oil at \$4 a barrel. There was no deficit in this province.

But what has this government squandered away? in '82, oil was at \$28 a barrel; '83, \$26 a barrel; '84, \$29; '85, \$27; in '86 they've had a bit of dip, but still certainly higher than what was around when we were balancing budgets in this province and delivering sound economic planning and management; '87, \$17 a barrel; '88, \$15 a barrel.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I've heard in this House and outside of this House, time after time after time, the government opposite complaining about the lack of revenue to deliver programs without deficit budgeting. And I say it's a shame; it's a misrepresentation of what the facts are. It's a deceitful government we have on the opposite side, and I suggest that they no longer deserve to govern.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — But there is a reason that they complain about the lack of revenue, and it's because there has been a lack of revenue in relative terms. Relative to what they should have got, relative to what they could have gotten, there is a decrease in revenues.

In 1983, the value of oil production in this province was \$1.7 billion; they generated \$684 million in revenue. In '84, it was \$2.1 billion, and they generated just over 700 million in revenue; '85, \$2.3 billion, and they generated 600 million in revenue; '86, 1.7 . . . \$1.1 billion, and they generated a paltry \$213 million in revenue. Is there any wonder that this government can't balance a budget, and is there any reason that people should believe that they're

putting the people of Saskatchewan before their friends, the large multinational oil companies?

(1930)

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that these figures are indicative of a government who has chosen its friends, and they have chosen the wrong friends. The multinational oil companies, when they pull their profits out of this province, don't build roads, and they don't educate people and they don't deal with our health care. When those dollars leave this province, they're gone never to return. This government had a choice. They had a choice between letting the oil companies rip this province off of millions and hundreds of millions of dollars; they had a choice between that and saying, we want you to pay your fair share for developing our resources and for mining our resources. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that didn't happen, and it's a sad commentary on a government that pretends to speak for the people. I would suggest to you that they've been a dismal failure in that regard along with many others.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the people in the year 2000 and beyond will be drawing parallels between the Anderson government and the divine government. and I use that as an adjective — and if you look up the interpretation of the word "divine" that's what I'm referring to.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. Order. I think the hon. member is using the name of a member in this House and I ask him to refrain from doing so.

Order. Order. Order, please. Order, please. The orders . . . the rules and regulations do not allow for a member to do indirectly what the rules do not allow directly.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll accept your ruling. I was merely trying to use an adjective to this particular government, and I could read into the record, if you'd like, and with your permission I will. What I was referring to, and I'll read the definition out of the Oxford, and it says: "Of, from, or God like, or a god; excellent, very beautiful; to discover, learn about future events by what are alleged to be magical means, or by inspiration or guessing."

And I would like, with your permission, to spell the word. It's spelled d-i-v-i-n-e, none of which could be used to describe our Premier, I might add.

And as I was saying, there are going to be some direct parallels drawn between the Anderson government of the '30s and this administration. And some of the similarities are really clear. In the 1930s they used to run around looking for food, some of those working people, and some of the farmers who had lost their land; and they were being fed at soup kitchens, they called them in those days; and they formed bread lines. And the parallel of the 1980s, of course, are the food banks, the major industry in this province right now.

In the 1930s we had cash-for-service health care, and what that meant is, if you don't have the cash you don't get served. And I suggest to you in the 1980s that that's the direction that this government will take. And I believe that

history will prove that to be correct.

In the 1930s they had Bennett buggies and dirt roads, and now we have pot-holes and red flags. And there were some other similarities as well, Mr. Speaker, the way this province has been devastated in terms of the economy. Those are some direct parallels between the '30s and the 1980s.

But what I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, is the sad part of all of these memories is that people will know it didn't have to be that way. And they will know this government had choices, but that they made the wrong choices.

But they won't be all bad memories, Mr. Speaker, because there are some that are going to have very fond memories of the 1980s under this administration, and I want to speak about them. The sons and daughters of the Peter Pocklingtons, as they go to the bank to pick up the interest cheques on the money that their parents took out of this province in the 1980s — they'll be very happy people. And I want to say that the shareholders of the purchasers of Manalta Coal and their children will have very, very fond memories of this administration. And I'd want to say that the heirs to the Weyerhaeuser billions will have fond memories of your administration as well. And the heirs to the multinational oil companies will be quite pleased with your administration, and there's no doubt about that. Because the millions of dollars that you have squandered could have gone into the hands of so very, very few, will create yet more wealth for those people — and you, my friends, will be responsible.

But there are others that will be happy. The Schoenhals and the Childers and the Childers family, those will all be happy folks — and the Pat Hills. And they'll have fond memories of the 1980s under your administration — and the George Hills as well. Those folks will all have very fond memories of your administration and what happened under your guidance in this province.

But I tell you there's going to be some other positive memories, Mr. Speaker. There are going to be memories of the defeat of this government, and there's going to be cheers from one end of this province to the other when the member that sits in that chair opposite as Premier will be replaced. And I want to say to you that there will be memories of the victory of a new government led by the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — There will be memories of the day when this administration was replaced by a government that was committed to restore health care to its rightful place as the best in North America. And there will be fond memories of replacing this administration with a government that will allow the people the right to work in this province and earn a decent living, the right to play and be with their families in our parks, and the right to prosper in this province.

And there will be fond memories of electing a government committed to spreading resource wealth to all of the people, not just to a few, and there will be fond memories as well to a government committed to seeing

that Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan people come first, no matter who you are or what you do. There will be very fond memories of returning to this province a government of decency and compassion and fairness and honesty, all of which this administration is lacking, and I want to say the comparisons will be black and white.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the estimates in the weeks to follow, because I think, and I'm sure, what will happen from this side of the House is we will prove this budget to be anything but what it's presented as in the throne speech and in the budget speech. The people of this province will become very clear, I'm sure, that the actual health care services will be decreased because the funding isn't there.

I'm disappointed, in terms of this budget — I want to say in terms of health care — that there was no mention of restoring the prescription drug plan or the school-based children's dental plan. And I want to say as well, Mr. Speaker, that in terms of education, the people of this province will know that there is less actual buying power for this education budget that was delivered a week ago.

And I want to say as well that I'm sure the people will understand that the budget for the Department of Highways is inadequate — \$5 million less than what was spent in 1981, and if you count inflation into that, it's a massive decrease. And I'm sure that the farming community in rural Saskatchewan will know that this government has done nothing to keep them on their farms. They've done nothing to look at restructuring of farm debt. They've done nothing to change the production loan changes that they made, that were absolutely not acceptable to the people of rural Saskatchewan. And I think they'll very very clear that there's actually a cut in the agriculture budget.

And those that are affected by yet more tax increases like the flat tax will know that this isn't the government that they want in power. And those that had expected some sanity to the fuel rebate system will know that this government still doesn't understand that you can't administer that kind of a program. And those that were expecting this government to do something concrete in terms of business tax will know that this government has put up a smoke-screen asking the municipal governments — who already are cut back in terms of the revenue-sharing grants from this government — to match dollar for dollar. They will know that those revenues are not going to be readily available to make the reductions in those business taxes. They'll know that the minister has abrogated his responsibility. And I would suggest to you there won't be much happiness out there.

They'll know as well that this government continues to govern for the large resource companies rather than to govern for the people of this province. And I think they will know clearly who their friends are and who their friends aren't. And that would suggest to me, Mr. Speaker, that this government will yet be in more electoral problems than they are already.

Mr. Speaker, it's my belief that members on this side of the

House will show this budget for what it really is and show this government for what it really is — empty and hollow; void of all credibility, all competence; and filled with corruption.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when I can stand in this legislature and address the people of this province and indicate to them that there is a budget before us that I can support. I would suggest that this is probably the third last budget that this government will ever deliver . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — . . . so we may have to suffer through two more of these after this one. But I want to say to you, that I believe in the very near future that there will be a budget before the people of this province that will restore some sanity to government spending, will restore some semblance of order to this province, that will deliver compassion, and a caring budget that cares about the people of this province more than it cares about the large multinational corporations.

But I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, I can't say that about this budget. And in conclusion, I will just indicate that I cannot and will not support a budget that inflicts yet more pain and more suffering on average Saskatchewan people. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a privilege to rise and to speak on this occasion on behalf of the residents of Saskatoon Sutherland constituency.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order.

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for calling the House to order.

It is a pleasure to speak on behalf of the people of Saskatoon Sutherland, and to comment on this budget as they themselves would comment on it, would that they had the opportunity to enter this Chamber and do so.

I would like to talk first of all about some of the mismanagement, some of the PC mismanagement that we see active still in this budget, because behind every single dollar figure in this budget that's what we have, is PC mismanagement. Something like mouse droppings — you find them all over the house when the mice get into the house. And that's what happened with this budget — droppings of cut-backs and incompetency from this government.

And so I say that if this Premier and if this PC government weren't so utterly incompetent and hadn't bungled and mismanaged Saskatchewan's affairs as it has, we would be in a much, much better situation to comment on this budget. We'd have a far different budget. Perhaps let us dream for a moment, Mr. Speaker. We might actually have had a surplus of \$329 million instead of a deficit announced in this budget of \$329 million — hardly possible with this crew on the opportunity side.

(1945)

Instead of this budget . . . With this budget we have yet one more, the seventh in a row, of seven consecutive PC deficits wrought on the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in this budget document there are countless references to the family and to the self-proclaimed concern that this government has for Saskatchewan families. And indeed in the last two or three weeks, the Premier himself has begun to extol loud and long his deep and abiding concern for Saskatchewan families. To hear him speak, you'd think that the name of our Premier was synonymous with God's gift to Saskatchewan families. And if this Premier could be believed — and he can't be believed by Saskatchewan people — you'd almost think that the family was yet a new PC sacred trust.

Well since this budget is under consideration . . . that's under consideration now is riddled with so many references to the family and saturated with all sorts of pious platitudes about their commitment to the family, I want to take a few moments tonight to look at that commitment and to look at whether it's solid and it's factual, or whether it's fantasy. I also want to look at that in particular in terms of what this budget means for individual nuclear families or Saskatchewan households, but also in terms of the larger Saskatchewan family and our Premier's responsibility for that family, namely the whole of the province.

One of the things that I noted right from the very beginning, as I listened to the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, was that there was a lot of talk in this budget about drugs and alcohol, and how concerned this government was about that problem.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order. We're having a little trouble hearing the member from Saskatoon Sutherland and I would like the co-operation of all members, including the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

**Mr. Koenker:** — One of the very first things I noticed as I listened to the budget being delivered last Thursday was all the concern for drug and alcohol abuse in the province. The Premier even talks about senior citizens abusing drugs and alcohol, which is hardly the truth; that really stretches the truth. But none the less, there was talk about that commitment. But I thought back, Mr. Speaker, that this was the same Premier who allowed alcohol advertising in the province after he was elected in his first term. Alcohol advertising — now that is really some concern for Saskatchewan families.

I also noted, Mr. Speaker, that in terms of the tax increase, there were tax increases in the flat tax again, hitting Saskatchewan people. There were increases . . . There have been all sorts of increases to licensing fees. There was even an increase in the tax on cigarettes announced in this budget. But there was not, Mr. Speaker, any increase on taxes for alcohol consumption from the government that is so concerned about Saskatchewan young people and their consumption of alcohol. Well I think that puts the lie to the way this government proclaims its concern for Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, I think of the prescription drug program also, and there's no doubt that this is the number one concern that I have heard in the constituency of Saskatoon Sutherland over the course of the last year — cuts, vicious cuts, to the Saskatchewan drug program. And in the last year, more people have expressed their concern about this particular program than have expressed their concern on any other single issue to me personally as their member of the legislature, and this includes all of the letters that I have recently received on the abortion issue — far more correspondence and phone calls on the prescription drug issue than on the abortion issue.

And does this budget do anything to address the issue, to rectify some of the heinous problems Saskatchewan people are experiencing with this particular budget? This budget doesn't do a thing — not a word about the prescription drug program.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, what it amounts to is this government is still saving money at the expense of Saskatchewan taxpayers. In 1986-87 the drug program cost the Saskatchewan government — this was before it was cut — \$76 million. In '87-88, after the cut-backs, it cost the government \$57 million. So an economy of almost \$20 million in one fell swoop, an economy at the expense of Saskatchewan taxpayers, mind you, in the first year.

And what do we find in this budget document this year? A further cut in government expenses relative to the Saskatchewan drug program. It's now estimated that the drug program will cost the Saskatchewan government some \$50 million — \$7 million less for the government; \$7 million more out of the pockets of Saskatchewan taxpayers.

And what we're seeing, Mr. Speaker, is really the privatization of health care. The burden of health care is shifted onto the backs of individual Saskatchewan families by the very Premier and his government who proclaim that they're concerned about Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, there's been absolutely no doubt, in terms of the people who've contacted me in the course of the last year, that they want their Premier to protect their health care programs. They want these programs preserved and protected not only for themselves but for their children, for their aunts and uncles, and for their grandchildren. Saskatchewan mothers and fathers want to know that if their children get sick, that there is provision for their medical care regardless of their ability to pay, independent of their ability to pay.

Saskatchewan families have a right to feel that way about their medical care. They're entitled to health care, and it's a damning indictment of this Minister of Health and a damning indictment of this Premier that Saskatchewan people have to go begging for health care in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — And so we hear the government say that this Premier is a protector and the defender of Saskatchewan families. That is absolutely appalling. Sure

he is the self-proclaimed champion of the family, but people see through his rhetoric, people see that this Premier is really disgusting. They see that he is a fraud and a fake with his false concern for Saskatchewan families. And, Mr. Speaker, every last man, woman, and child in the province of Saskatchewan knows full well that actions speak louder than words.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — And this budget does nothing for Saskatchewan families when it comes to restoring the drug program for Saskatchewan people. In spite of all the pious words, this government not only has cut the drug program, continues to cut it, but fails to restore it in this budget.

Indeed, and this is what is positively immoral, Mr. Speaker, this budget provides more, way more than a 200 per cent increase in funding for public relations in the Department of Health. Now isn't that wonderful. Doesn't that help Saskatchewan people? From \$1.3 million in funding for public relations last year, to \$2.8 million.

Well what we have is quite obviously an attempt to hide the dirty laundry, to sell a new vision of privatization to Saskatchewan people — privatized health care — and to cover it up and make it smell sweet and good. This is positively scandalous when there are 11,000 people waiting for beds in Saskatoon hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, just this morning, just before lunch, I had a constituent phone my office down here in Regina and announce to me that she had waited for five months to have day surgery. She'd been told that she was to have the surgery last September, found out only in February that she would be called for the surgery, went those five months, had the surgery — day surgery — only to learn then that they found cancer. Now the same woman, after that five-month delay, has been told that she has to wait two to three weeks for a hospital bed so that she can have surgery now done on her cancer.

And there's nothing in this budget that addresses the situation of this woman. She's now about to enter her fourth week of waiting for a hospital bed, and this is positively scandalous and immoral in the province of Saskatchewan. There's no doubt about it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — Medicare like this sure doesn't do very much for Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker. It does nothing at all.

And what we have in this budget are increases to public relations, a 200 per cent increase in public relation funding. Well I say this Premier is no friend of Saskatchewan families. I say that this Premier is a pretend protector of Saskatchewan families, and that he's positively immoral.

And I'd like to take another look at how this budget impacts on Saskatchewan families, to leave health care for a while, and to look at another top concern of most Saskatchewan families — and that is namely the higher



and higher taxation that they have consistently experienced at the hands of this government.

I say, Mr. Speaker, if this government were really concerned about Saskatchewan families, then this Premier and his budget would have done something to reduce the provincial taxation and not have increased taxation with the flat tax up to 2 per cent.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. Why is the member on his feet?

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Mr. Speaker, I be leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the members of the opposition, and in particular of course the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, for allowing me to interrupt his speech to introduce guests. I thank you, sir, and as soon as I'm finished, naturally we'd be pleased to hear you continue.

Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery is a hockey team from the town of Spiritwood. They're here for the 22nd Annual Downtowners Optimist Centennial Cup tournament, and so far going really well, from what I hear.

The team is from the town of Spiritwood in the constituency of Turtleford. They're called Spiritwood DWs, and they're in the pee wee division, the age group being some 12 to 13 years old. They're accompanied by coach Boris Sidoruk, manager Quinton Wingerter, and trainer Kevin Warkentin, and we have approximately 35 in the group here this evening.

Tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, I may say, my wife has invited the parents over for coffee and muffins to our place. We don't get to see folks from the constituency all that often down here in Regina. It is a pretty long drive each way to come down here, so we appreciate seeing them in the legislature this evening. As a matter of fact, my wife taught quite a few of those little duffers sitting up there tonight. So I'll be meeting with you in a few minutes.

I invite you to watch some of the debate that's going on in the House tonight. We're debating the budget, which was delivered last week in the Assembly, and at the moment one of the members of the opposition is taking his right, his democratic right, to put forth his suggestions and his criticisms of the budget as it was presented. So I invite you to watch some of the debate. Nice to see you here. Welcome to the Assembly, and I would invite all hon. members to join with me in giving a very warm welcome to that team from Spiritwood. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(2000)

### SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

### MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Lane that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance.

**Mr. Koenker:** — I do join in welcoming the folks from Spiritwood. I hope you enjoy the proceedings here tonight.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, if this government would have wanted to have done something for Saskatchewan families, something positive, it would not have increased the flat tax yet again.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — From the little man with such big concern for Saskatchewan families — in last year's budget we got a flat tax increase of 1.5 per cent, a sales tax increase from 5 per cent to 7 per cent, and a gas tax reinstated — the very tax that the Premier had said would never again darken the doorstep of Saskatchewan people, and Saskatchewan people are obviously betrayed with that promise. Now again, in this budget, from the same little man pretending to be the preserver and protector of Saskatchewan families, these same families are hit with more and higher taxes.

The gas tax stays at 32 cents a gallon, something that the Premier said — promised — would never again happen, wasn't eliminated this time, Mr. Speaker. The flat tax goes up again. And he wants to see property taxes go up now as he wishes for a solution to the problem of local business taxation but refuses to accept any responsibility for funding local municipalities.

This budget is duplicity of the highest order.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — And is it any wonder then, when we see these kinds of tax increases, that a Saskatchewan family with an income of \$35,000 a year pays the second-highest level of taxation in all of Canada? And this budget then dares to cut the corporate tax rate from 17 per cent to 15 per cent — after all of these increases on to the backs of families, the corporate income tax rate is cut. And so big business, as is documented in this budget, will save some \$9 million just in the corporate income tax rate changes alone.

And for the resource companies like oil companies, potash and coal companies, this budget provides a new resource royalty reduction worth more than \$30 million.

**An Hon. Member:** — The family of big business.

**Mr. Koenker:** — The family of big business gets the concern of this government but not ordinary Saskatchewan families.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — And so I would like to know, Mr.

Speaker, just where this Premier gets off saying that he's concerned about Saskatchewan families — what drivel. I say that is absolute utter drivel. This budget shows duplicity of the highest order — tax increases for Saskatchewan family, tax decreases for corporate friends of the PC Party. That's the tax story in this budget.

And then the good people of Saskatchewan are asked to sit back and to hold their breath and to wait for tax reform. Well, people have been waiting for tax reform from this government since the first year of its election and they haven't seen it yet, not positive tax reform that helps Saskatchewan families.

What a wonderful idea. How considerate the Premier of this province really is of Saskatchewan families. After massive tax increases in the last year, more tax increases this year, he says to people: you just keep on paying your bills, keep on paying your taxes and we're going to look at the tax situation. We're going to study it; we're going to discuss it.

Well, all I can say is, God help Saskatchewan families because this Premier certainly won't do it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — Mr. Speaker, every single solitary time this Premier has touched the tax situation here in Saskatchewan, he's taken progressively more money out of the pockets of Saskatchewan people. He's eliminated the \$230 property improvement grants that families used to receive, individuals, Saskatchewan households. And he went to the flat earth society to draw up the idea of the unfair flat tax — a flat tax, incidentally, that penalizes people for contributing to charities and churches and allows people to dodge their taxes if they have high incomes and can salt them away in investments. And that's not very fair to Saskatchewan people.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — That's an insult to Saskatchewan people. And the members opposite should be ashamed of that flat tax, that it ever darkened the doorstep of Saskatchewan. And so I say, when those members opposite start to talk about tax reform, I say, God save us from Tory tax reform.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — People have had seven years now, Mr. Speaker, to see these folks on the opposite side reform their ways, and they haven't done it. They haven't done it yet. And Saskatchewan families are not going to be holding their breath in hopes that this government will decide to tax Saskatchewan families less perhaps out of the goodness of their heart, because they know that there is no heart on that side of the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to relate just a couple of — maybe two or three — examples from my personal experience in the constituency as to how this government and this sort of budget has failed to stand up for Saskatchewan people. And I think of an incident that happened last fall, when a young woman on social assistance was forced to call me at home on a Friday

evening in tears because she was sick and she had just spent the last of her cash from her social assistance cheque on her medication and there was nothing left in her cupboard. Mr. Speaker, this was a pathetic, pathetic situation. She phoned in despair because she had just learned that the government was going to remove her bus allowance and her laundry allowance. And this is just sickening. This is absolutely sickening.

**Mr. Speaker,** I know enough about theology to call this sort of situation downright immoral, downright immoral.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — When the minister . . .

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

**Mr. Koenker:** — And these actions from this government, I call immoral. When the Premier of the province not only sanctions these kinds of cut-backs but perpetrates them, that is immoral when it comes from the Premier of this province. That is not protecting Saskatchewan families. That's victimizing the poor. That's victimizing the most vulnerable and the most weak and those who are most in need among us . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Yes,. Mr. Speaker, when this Premier trumpets his tough love for people on welfare, I get sick. It makes me absolutely sick that he can talk about tough love to a \$100-a-plate luncheon for supporters of the PC Party in the Bessborough Hotel and then my constituents can go hungry. I call that sickening and immoral.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — And anyone on that side of the House who would want to defend that kind of thing, I would call sickening and immoral as well.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — Mr. Speaker, I think of another example of constituents who have come to me and complained about the enhanced quality of family life that this Premier has foisted off on the province of Saskatchewan. I'm talking about the closing of the North Park Centre in Prince Albert.

These people, Mr. Speaker, came to me concerned because they learned of the announcement of the closing. They had no consultation. There was no communication, and the decision was simply announced and thrown at them. The family was left in the lurch. There were no details of any arrangements to be made for their son. Simply that he would go to Valley View or he might go somewhere else. Where else, when he might go, any of those details weren't forthcoming.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the son of this couple had seen their son live in Moose Jaw before, and they didn't want him to go back there; he didn't want to go back there. And when they heard that North Park was closing, they didn't know

where else their son might go. Needless to say they were very concerned. And for the entire course of the summer, this family was left in a limbo, a never-never sort of land not knowing where their son was going to wind up, wondering, waiting, worrying about their son. And all this from the Minister of Social Services who is supposed to serve Saskatchewan people. This isn't serving Saskatchewan people, this isn't caring for the best interests of Saskatchewan families. It's a sorry, sorry commentary on this government.

And then I come, Mr. Speaker, to 6,700 Saskatchewan families, many of whom have lost their entire life savings with the collapse of Principal Trust, Associated Investors, and First Investors. These are people, Mr. Speaker, who trusted this government to protect them. In fact, that is precisely why we have government involved in that sort of regulation, to do what we as individual citizens or households would find utterly impossible to do ourselves, namely to scrutinize the financial statements of all sorts of trust companies and other financial institutions. They trusted their Premier and his government to this job, to regulate trust companies doing business in Saskatchewan, all three of them. But the job was too big. There were two companies too many, First Investors and Associated Investors.

And as a result, because of the failure of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Affairs to adequately regulate the trust companies — all three of them — these Saskatchewan people lost their entire life savings because of government neglect. These are retirement savings for many of these people, Mr. Speaker. They are left empty handed, literally empty handed after a lifetime of work. These were depositors, Mr. Speaker. These were not risk-takers in high-risk ventures; these were depositors in a trust company. There were government rules; there were filing regulations to safeguard against this kind of collapse; but it was too much for this government to fulfil its responsibility in this regard and honour its commitments to its own people.

I say that Saskatchewan people are entitled to expect more out of their government than this kind of incompetence and unacceptable regulation. There's no protection here. People shouldn't have to be at risk when they put their trust in their own government, for heaven's sake. They expect government to protect them. They expect government to assist them in retrieving their lost deposits. And so far all this government has done is hired a lawyer to sit as an observer in the hearings being held at the Code inquiry in Edmonton. A lot of protection, a lot of protection.

People in Saskatchewan want fewer excuses and more government protection. And I say if this Premier and if this PC government really cared about Saskatchewan families, really cared about protecting them, then we wouldn't see Saskatchewan senior citizens robbed of their entire life savings by virtue of government mismanagement and neglect and incompetence.

(2015)

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koenker:** — And that's the situation. That's what's happened in the last year with people who put their money into First Investors and Associated Investors, Mr. Speaker. And so how does this impact on the budget? What does this have to do with the budget? What do we find in this budget in the Department of Consumer and Commercial Affairs? More cuts. More cuts to the regulatory agencies such as those who monitor the trust companies; more cuts to licensing and insurance regulations. In 1985-86 there was some \$2 million that was estimated would be spent in this area, with some 56 people policing that kind of activity. The cut-backs of last year's budget brought that figure down a half a million, from 2 million to \$1.5 million, and cut the number of people involved in policing these companies and enforcing regulations from 56 down to 39.

And we see cuts again in this budget — in 1987-88, down to 1.4 million, not because the work is getting any cheaper or any easier, but simply because this work, this regulatory work, just isn't an apparent priority with this government. It doesn't fit the PC ideology of deregulation, rugged individualism, and privatization. Let the buyer beware — that's the word that goes out.

And even when it comes to film and video classification, you'd think that they'd want to at least, having initiated that classification system in the Department of Consumer and Commercial Affairs, that this government would want to preserve and promote that kind of protection of young people when it comes to film and video classification. And we see cut-backs there as well — down from \$130,000 in '85 and '86, to 1124 last year, and now down to 77. There's half a person, half a staff person allotted to do that classification work now. Two years ago there were two people doing that work. Wonderful protection, wonderful concern for Saskatchewan families.

What a paltry commitment to the standards of family morality and public decency from the Premier of this province. He likes to give his impression of being concerned about family life, but I say, let him put his money where his mouth is — and he doesn't do that in this budget.

Mr. Speaker, this PC policy of blind faith in the unregulated market-place has led to the victimization of Saskatchewan families, as I indicated in the Principal Trust fiasco.

Even worse still, perhaps, is the betrayal of farm families in this budget. Farm families really get nothing from this budget. Why should they expect any more from this government? In spite of the trouble they've been having, this budget offers nothing to Saskatchewan farm families, not even the prospect of hope. This budget does nothing about the nine and three-quarter per cent interest rate demanded with the farm production loan program, while Weyerhaeuser gets preferential interest rates — what are they, 6 per cent? Six per cent money for Weyerhaeuser; nine and three-quarters per cent that Saskatchewan farm families have to pay. This budget does nothing, nothing whatsoever to rectify that situation.

And I say if the Premier of this province really cared about

Saskatchewan families and not the multinational family of international corporations, he would give farm families the same kind of deal that he gave to Weyerhaeuser. If Weyerhaeuser only pays when it makes money, why can't Saskatchewan people get that same deal from their very own Premier, the one who professes to be concerned about them?

Mr. Speaker, I'd like now to look just briefly at the budget in terms of the larger economic family in this province — in other words, the whole of the province and its people as family. I do this because if we consider literally the root meaning of the Greek word *oikonomia*, it means economy, and it means quite literally the rule or the ordering, or, we could say, the management of the household or of the family. That's the original root meaning of the word "economy," the rule or the management of the individual family household. And now it's been extended to the rule or management of the whole of the public business — the larger public family.

And surely if the Premier of Saskatchewan is — or in the case of the present Premier, ought to be — more than simply a figure-head, then we might reasonably expect that he could be held accountable for his management of the family affairs of the larger provincial economy, our larger household, so to speak. After all, the Premier is the head of the province, is the head of our Saskatchewan family.

And so when we look at the man who loves so much to talk about the family, just how has he taken care of the provincial family he is responsible for, directly responsible for? He loves to talk about the morality of other people and their responsibilities, but now we can look more narrowly at his responsibility as Premier.

And these budget estimates document, Mr. Speaker, his ineptitude and his incompetence. Take, for example, the bottom line in this budget, a deficit of 329 million — \$329 million that the Saskatchewan people will go further into the red during the course of this year.

And it isn't as if this were some sort of unfortunate accident — that's hardly the case at all — due to circumstances totally out of the Premier's control. This has been the story each and every year for the last seven years — seven straight, consecutive deficit budgets from this Premier — so that today this budget documents that our collective Saskatchewan family owes \$3.7 billion. That's billion with a "b." In seven years, \$3.7 billion, all of it incurred since this Premier took office.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you what kind of parent mortgages his or her children's future. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what kind of a parent is so profligate as to spend the children's inheritance. Would you do it to your own children? Would you drive them into debt deeper and deeper, year after year, if there were anything that you could do to avoid that, or to mitigate that? I doubt it, Mr. Speaker. There's hardly a parent or head of a family who would wish that on their children. And yet, Mr. Speaker, the head of our Saskatchewan family has done exactly that — has been incredibly derelict in the discharge of his responsibility, his own responsibility for this management of the Saskatchewan household or

economy. Derelict and delinquent, I say. There's no other word for his actions. And that's what this budget documents.

And it isn't as if he didn't have options. Sure the times were tough in the last few years. But times weren't always tough, especially in the first half of his government. And still his hands aren't tied helplessly behind his back, as the Premier would lead us to believe. He still has options, plenty of options, if only he has the moral resolve to exercise them. The problem, Mr. Speaker, is that the Premier has made decisions and he's made the wrong ones. He's mismanaged the province's affairs, and that's why we have consecutive budget deficits totalling \$3.7 billion.

How do we comprehend or understand \$3.7 billion? Well one way, perhaps, is to say that the daily interest on this deficit of 3.7 billion is now approximately approaching the neighbourhood of a \$1 million a day. That's \$1 million a day, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan people are paying for nothing. They pay it out, but they get absolutely nothing back in return. In fact, they get falling credit ratings in return, from the bond and banking institutions. Forget about paying off this deficit of \$3.7 billion, forget about paying that off entirely. This government is paying in the neighbourhood of a \$1 million a day just to pay the interest on the deficit, and not even touching the principal; it's not even talking about the principal. Little wonder we don't hear more about the deficit in this budget.

I know the numbers are large, Mr. Speaker. Another way to look at it, as a rough sort of rule of thumb, is to look at the amount paid in interest each year, in terms of it being twice the amount that the government spends on agriculture in this province during the course of the year. More than \$329 million — that's what the interest on this deficit is, more than \$329 million. That's more than twice what the Premier and his government spends on all of agriculture.

Now what kind of province might we have, Mr. Speaker, if there had been better management, a lower deficit or no deficit at all, and one in which we weren't paying such high interest rates? When we're paying a \$1 million a day in interest, that's \$1 million a day that can't go to hospital beds, or into educational classrooms at the U of S (University of Saskatchewan) or in elementary schools. That's \$1 million a day that can't go into agriculture or into highways or into any number of other things.

People can literally name the things that they would will or wish the government to address as funding priorities, and then turn to the deficit and find out why those aren't funding priorities because of the mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, this Premier has had choices and he's made the wrong choices, and that's why we find ourselves in the situation that we presently are. Today with this budget, the Premier . . . if we didn't have this deficit, we could have a far different budget.

This government does have choices. It's given \$1.7 billion to the oil companies in royalty holidays. The Premier still wants to spend \$1 billion on Rafferty-Shand.

We have \$20 million being spent this year in government advertising. That would go a long way, certainly, to fund hospital beds. We have \$8.4 million — 8.4 million this year — going to rent empty office space. That makes a whole lot of sense. That does Saskatchewan families a whole lot of good. We have \$70 million given to PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) in a give-away, \$23 million to Saskoil in a sell-off, and \$22 million to Peter Pocklington. That makes a whole lot of sense to Saskatchewan families, too.

And so the question, Mr. Speaker, is one of fairness. The question is one, when we look at this budget, of what Saskatchewan people have a right to expect from this government when it comes to this budget and to protection and services. The Premier's hands aren't tied helplessly behind his back. And, Mr. Speaker, I say that when the Premier of this province tries to go around and paint himself as the protector and defender of the family, the guardian of morality and integrity, he had better take a long, hard look at himself, at those affairs for which he has direct responsibility and which he has some measure of control over. I think it's high time that we began demanding of this government a far better accounting of their stewardship of the public purse than we find in this budget.

(2030)

And it's for this reason, Mr. Speaker, because this government totally fails to protect Saskatchewan families, either in the small, in the sense of the nuclear family, or in the larger sense of the whole of the economy, that I cannot and will not support this budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not at all surprised, I am not at all surprised that this government, those government members opposite, do not stand up and defend this budget.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start tonight by quoting a few passages from the Premier in his speech the other day. I'd just like to pick up on the theme of the last speaker, and that's of the family, talking about the family. And the Premier said, and I quote:

I also want to say to all Saskatchewan people who may be watching these proceedings today in the legislature, to listen very carefully to what I am about to say with respect to democracy, with respect to families, about decency and fairness, and about the many challenges and, indeed, the alternatives we face in the legislature and in society.

And, Mr. Speaker, he goes on to say:

The Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, is about families. And many people in the province are worried about what threatens families today — what are the dangers; what do we need to do, particularly in this legislature; what are the temptations; what are the rules; what are the guide-lines that we're going to provide our children with respect to fairness, with respect to decency, with respect to principles that hold families together?

That's the questions he laid out. And he goes on to talk about priorities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in health and education and agriculture and jobs. And he goes on to talk. He says:

. . . I am concerned — rules for fairness, rules for decency, and rules to protect families, and indeed individuals.

After that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he went on in a rage on character defamation. This is the rhetoric that's coming out of the Premier of this province's mouth.

I've never in my life, Mr. Deputy Speaker, heard anyone in this House stand up and slander other people in this province and on these benches more than the Premier did the other day. And I find that totally, totally disgusting. He talks about the priorities and families and decency, and he turns around and slanders people. Talks about people and their decency. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is none more indecent than the Premier of this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — And I say you that in all sincerity. And just to prove my point, just to prove my point, just to prove my point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's talk about families. Let's talk about the labour force in the past year from February '87 to February '88. Unemployed increased by 1,000 to 41,000 in Saskatchewan and it fell across Canada at 15.6 per cent.

Talking about families and decencies and his priorities, and here is the reality: unemployment going up in Saskatchewan and going down in other places. Saskatchewan unemployment rate rose from 8.2 to 8.5 per cent. And during the same time period, unemployment dropped from 10.5 to 8.6 across Canada.

And he talked about the children and the youth. And here are some statistics for the youth, Mr. Deputy Speaker. the number of employed dropped in Saskatchewan from 89,000 to 86,000, but increased across Canada by 1.2 per cent. The youth unemployment rate increased in Saskatchewan from 13.4 to 15.2 per cent — increased — and it dropped across Canada from 16.2 to 13.3 per cent. That's the priorities of this government. And yet the rhetoric that comes out of their mouths say, we're doing it for the people of this province. I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facts tell the people of this province that they're wrong — it's pure rhetoric.

And then we can talk about bankruptcies. In 1987 the total number of bankruptcies in Canada increased by 5.9

per cent over '86 levels. In Saskatchewan, the total for '87 was an increase of 8.7 per cent. That's the priorities he talks about — his priorities and the priorities of his government and decency in the family. And he's bankrupting the small businesses of this province with his policies.

And add on to that the PC economic forecast for out-migration. And it says 85,000 people could migrate from the province between now and 1995. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is some priority for a government to have. Some priority for a premier of this province to stand in this place and give us the rhetoric about decency in families when he's sitting back and letting people leave this province in droves. When he doesn't have any ideas on any policies of how to put people to work when there's jobs to be had, but he puts his money in the wrong pockets as far as we're concerned.

And what happens? I can sit back and criticize this government for its actions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and so what? Maybe I'm wrong. But let's just look at some people who look at economics and the economy of this province and decide what's happening. In July 1985, from Moody's Investor Service, we went from a AA1 to a AA rating — we dropped. In January 1986, we dropped again from a AA to a AA3. In August of '86, what happened? We dropped again, according to Moody's, from a AA3 to an A1. One particular credit rating agency dropped us three times from July '85 til August '86 — three times. They're the people who supposedly know the economics of this province, can see what's going, and have decided that this government can't do the job. And then there's Standard and Poor's, another credit rating agency, dropped from, in 1986 in April, from a AA plus to a AA; in March '87 from a AA to AA minus. Another agency, Canadian Bond Rating (Agency) Service, two drops from AA plus to a AA in January '86; from a AA to a AA minus in January '87.

That just reinforces, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my opinion that this government is incapable of running this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — They cannot take the income generated from this province and place it to benefit the people of this province. We say that, I say that, the people of this province say that, and the investing rating agencies say that. Are we all wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I ask you. Are the people of this province wrong when they say this government can't run? Is this opposition caucus wrong when they say this government can't run this province? And are the three highly rated credit rating agencies wrong when they dropped the credit rating of this province? Is everybody out of step but our boy Johnny over here across the way? That's what he is trying to tell us. The Premier of this province is trying to say, everybody's wrong; I have a blueprint. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, his blueprint scares a lot of people out of this province as indicated.

And why do we say it scares us, and why do we say they can't be trusted? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 1982 this

government made some big promises in their election campaign — big promises. They were going to eliminate the gas tax and never see it come back. Did that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, happen? It certainly did not happen. You can't trust them.

They were going to eliminate sales tax in the first term of office. Did that happen, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It didn't happen. But that's what they promised. And that's why the people of this province can't trust a Tory.

They were going to cut income tax by 10 per cent, and that didn't happen either.

You can fool some of the people some of the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'll tell you, you can't fool the people of this province when you stand in front of them day after day and repeat your rhetorical garbage that comes out of the mouth of the Premier of this province.

That people don't believe him for good reasons — because he can't be trusted. And when you can't trust the Premier of the province, I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the province is in pretty bad shape. And that's the state of it right now.

And the members opposite talk about the New Democrats on this side scaring the people of this province. Well let me tell you something about being scared. I am scared, and a lot of people out there are telling me they're scared too. They're scared because they can't get a job. They're scared because they're losing their farms, and they're scared because they're going on day after day on welfare or unemployment with no hope for the future. And I'm not preaching doom and gloom, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm speaking the truth, the reality that this government is loading on the people of this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — And I hear the people across, the members across, stand in their places and they say, everything's just fine. I talk to people in my constituency, and another one will say, I talk to people in my constituency and they're very pleased with the budget, and they're pleased with what's happening in this province, and they're pleased with the way the Tory plan is going.

Well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if they honestly believe that, they haven't gone out of this room for a long, long time. Because when you get out of this room and talk to the people of this province, they're telling you: don't touch the dental plan, don't touch the drug plan, don't have 11,000 people waiting in hospital line-ups. And the rhetoric that comes out of these people says everything is okay, we have a plan. How can we believe that?

Well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hungry children of this province can't fill their stomachs with Tory rhetoric. The seniors and others can't administer your rhetoric to cure their ills instead of the drugs they need. Cancer patients and other people waiting in hospital beds can't use your rhetoric to receive their necessary operations. Dental nurses can't use your

rhetoric to get jobs, Mr. Deputy Speaker. and families can't use your Tory rhetoric to pay their high, high taxes.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll tell you what the people are saying, the children are saying of this province. They're saying, Daddy, why do we have to leave our farm? Why do we have to leave our farm today? They're saying, Daddy, why don't you have a job? Why don't you have a job? And let's think about those young children when they grow up. And you listen carefully please, because when they grow up, the people . . . the children on the farms will have fond memories of you, I'm sure, driving them off the land — worrisome looks on their parents' faces.

And I'll tell you, the children in the cities who line up in line waiting for the food bank will have fond memories of this Tory government. And I'll tell you, those memories will last for a long, long time. Those memories of standing in line at the food bank, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are not fond memories.

And I'll tell you then, these people stand up in their places and they say you're scaring the people, you're promoting scare tactics. Well I'll tell you and I'll tell the members opposite, those people are scared. They're scared because they don't have money, they don't have income, and they have no hope for the future. And yet you stand in your place day after day and say there's no problems, we're going to fix it. You're going to fix it. But it may be too late for a lot of people in this province. It'll be too late for those who left; it'll be too late for those who couldn't buy their drugs. I'll tell you, it will be too late for some of those people, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'd like to turn now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a moment to agriculture. We see in this budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, an \$8 million . . . nearly \$8 million cut in the agriculture budget. Here we go again — 25 per cent cut last year in agriculture, and things must have really improved because they can cut the budget by another \$8 million. They don't need that money for agriculture.

(2045)

And they have some programs . . . they have a lot of programs. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just to show you, to put it in context, this government spent as much time talking about increasing taxes in their budget as they did about agriculture, and they cut \$8 million out of the agriculture budget.

We have one little program that I want to talk about just for a minute, and that was the announcement in the budget that there was going to be an incentive for the livestock industry. Partnerships, corporations can receive up to \$8 million per operation for a livestock incentive — \$8 million.

Well I'm sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that every family farm in this province is going to run out and grab \$8 million to finance their livestock operation. I ask, is that geared for the family farm who's running a 100-cow herd? Is that geared

for the family farm who are diversifying their economy by having livestock and grain and hogs? Is that going to help that family farm, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

I'll tell you it's not, and I'll tell you who it's going to help. It's going to help people, the friends of Tories who they tell — and they may believe them — that free trade is going to boom the agriculture, or the livestock industry in this province. They're leading them down the garden path, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'll tell you why. If you have \$8 million at nine and three-quarter per cent interest for the livestock in this province, I can tell you, I can predict exactly, who is going to take that money. And it's not going to be the family farm. It's going to be large corporate entities, financed by people other than farmers to try to put this livestock industry back unchanged. But why do they do it that way, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They do it that way because that's the friends of the Tories; that's the business people the Tories are looking after.

They're not looking after the family farm. In fact, if we look at what they're doing to livestock on the family farm, they have a cash advance program that a lot of small family farms took for their livestock operation. And what did they do for that cash advance? They cut it back to 75 per cent of what they could take. They made the farmers pay it back because the livestock industry was doing better. Things were doing better in the livestock industry. So they cut back on the family operator in livestock and they turned around and they'll give \$8 million to a corporate entity to promote the livestock industry. What kind of nonsense, what kind of illogical garbage is that?

And I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'll tell the people over across the way here, that if they think that Saskatchewan farmers are falling for this garbage rhetoric that you're putting out, if you think they can't see through you like they can see through a clear window pane, you're misleading yourselves.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — Because when you cut back on family farm operations and give money to large corporate entities to try to promote livestock, that is not in support of the family farm.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can just look a little closer at the trend this government is leading to in this budget. And if you look at the land transfer program, there is none. And I'll tell you, I'm not one to stand up here and criticize a government or anybody who is doing well. I'd like to think that if something's worth mentioning, I'll mention it. And honestly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have looked long and hard in here and I'll give you some examples. It says the grant, out of the budget *Estimates* 1988-89, "Grant to the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan for interest subsidy pursuant to The Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan Act," last year estimated at \$36 million, this year estimated at \$26 million. Grants for interest subsidy down \$10 million — down \$10 million. What kind of support is that to the family farm, to the person who's retiring and who can't sell his land because nobody can afford to buy it? That's really supporting him — reducing it.

And then they go along and it says: "Grant to the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan for an allowance for losses on loans pursuant to The Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan Act," — for losses on loans. They jump that up a million and a half dollars because they know that there's going to be losses. and instead of giving an interest rate protection and assistance, they cut that and they put taxpayers' money into insuring the losses.

And let's read on. "Counselling and Assistance for Farmers — Implementation of guarantees," implementation of guarantees meaning that under the CAF (counselling and assistance for farmers ) program the government, who is guaranteeing the loan, is going to have to pay on some of those guarantees to the banks because the farmer won't be able to pay.

And what do they do? They jump that in their estimates \$2.6 million. and that tells me that this government knows that there's farmers who are going to be going under, knows that the banks are going to be calling in the loans under the CAF program, and that tells me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government instead of ensuring that the farmers stay on the land, it's ensuring that the banks get their money. And that's where the priorities are.

And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll flip over the Justice department. And under that number 28 is the Farm Land Security Board. Farm Land Security Board, last year \$608,000; this year just about \$2.5 million — \$2.5 million for the Farm Land Security Board. Now with all due respect to the board, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has no teeth.

But is this government taking taxpayers' money and shoving it into the Farm Land Security Board to counsel farmers, to help farmers? No, to get them off the land. And if we want to look at some of the statistics from the Farm Land Security Board, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since the beginning there was 2,251 foreclosure notices filed on 1,806 farmers. Right now they're about 800 cases behind; they are not yet handled, and only 106 recommendations, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the court that the farmers should not be foreclosed on — 106 recommended in favour of the farmer out of 1,800 cases.

Well let's look at the recommendations in favour of the lenders — 289. So nearly 3:1 in favour of the lender. And where is this government's program to transfer land? Where is this government's program for assistance to agriculture? I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's non-existent, that's where it is.

And if you just tally out what this Farm Land Security Board cost, the cost of the program last year was just over a million dollars. 1.284; and if you multiply that out, that's about \$1,215 per farmer helped. That's an incredible amount of money that this government is spending on possibly helping 106 farmers. But they don't have any ideas of how to keep them on the land. They have no idea of how to keep them on the land. And that's the priorities of this government — they don't have any when it comes to agriculture.

I'd like to turn just for a minute now, Mr. Deputy Speaker,

to a couple of recent program changes that this government has made. First of all, I'd like to talk about the community pasture program. Did we see in this budget anything to show that the community pastures were going to be maintained as they were as the farmers wanted, as the government didn't want, without consulting with farmers, unilaterally change the program? Nothing.

And I'll tell you, I've talked to a lot of the farmers and ranchers involved in the community pastures, from a lot of areas that the members opposite represent. And those farmers and ranchers are telling me that's the last time I'm voting Tory. And let's face it, I'm being quite honest. Traditionally a lot of farmers and ranchers have voted Tory. I don't take that away from them because they were convinced by the rhetoric. They were convinced by the rhetoric, and now when they see what's actually happening in the field of agriculture and specifically with the community pastures, they're saying, this government doesn't consult, this government doesn't listen, this government is bent on its ideology of privatizing, and community pastures is just one on the list.

That's what this government and this Premier is doing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, trying to take the money out of farmers' pockets to privatize everything just on ideology. That is such garbage. That is no way to run a province and the farmers know that. And I'll ask these members to stand up and deny that. And they wouldn't when they had their turn.

I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are members, like this member opposite over here who has stood behind his Premier babbling about the farm production loan program. He didn't have any ideas. The Premier stands up and says well, we talked to all the farm groups, and we talked to farmers, and we consulted with everybody, and they wanted to extend it over 10 years, and they wanted to up the interest rate, and they wanted a new security agreement. Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is wrong. The consultation merely went as far as the 10-year extension. It was nobody's idea but the Premier's and the government opposite to tie farmers up with security and up the interest rates.

And the Premier of this province stands in his place and he says farmers asked for it. well that is garbage, and the farmers know it's garbage. And so I and many other people, through letters and phone calls, have tried to convince this government. They say, look, we don't have the money. We can't tie up our security because it's going to put in jeopardy our operating capital. Things have gotten worse from last year. Why are you increasing the interest rate? Why do we deserve this? That's what they are saying, why do we deserve this?

And members opposite know that they've got the letters. They've received the phone calls, and they'll stand in their place and say the farmers and the farm organizations asked for this and that's what we had to do. Well that's garbage and they know it's garbage.

And another thing the farmers are asking, they're saying why doesn't Weyerhaeuser get treated the same as farmers do? And I can't stress this point enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A large multinational corporation walks



into this province at the beck and call of the government, strikes a deal, and says, well we don't have to make any payments unless we make some money. And the government says, fair enough. You're an upstanding corporate citizen; you'll do your duty and create jobs and manage our forests properly. The government believed that, I'm sure. So they don't have to make any payments unless they make a profit.

And why then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why would a Premier — let's just listen — why would a Premier who's supposed strong strength is in the rural areas with farmers, why would he stand up and make changes, ridiculous changes, to a program that makes no sense to a farmer, that they didn't ask for, that they can't handle, and give a better deal to Weyerhaeuser? It is a straight . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — He betrayed them.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Yes, I agree, a straight absolute case of betrayal. And that is why the movement is out in the country away from this Tory government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — They have one sweetheart deal, easy term credit for Weyerhaeuser large multinational corporation, and another tough deal for Saskatchewan farmers where they have to pay regardless of their income. And let's take it a little further. Weyerhaeuser's profits are going up; farmers' profits are going down. What a betrayal of the farmers of this province!

And if you members over there, if you members over there don't understand that, well I feel sorry for you. And I think you could do right now anything that you wanted to do, and the farmers of this province would say, sorry, boys, we don't trust you any longer. And that's what they're saying, and members opposite know they're saying that. And that's why they are moving away from this Tory government because they were betrayed.

So Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was anxiously awaiting this budget because I was hoping for some announcements. I was hoping for the farmers of this province that there would be some announcements on debt, on stabilizing the world economy, stabilizing the debt of farmers, helping out the income, adjusting the production loans so that it made some sense — no such announcements.

(2100)

But I'd just like to go through some of the announcements, some of the highlights in the government's own highlight package. Agriculture . . . And just before I do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to nit-pick a little bit. I don't like nit-picking, but I have to right now. In the speech, the budget address, we have a number of headings. We have fiscal policy, economic development, and we have other major headings — fiscal situation. And what does agriculture have? Small print — agricultural development. And I know why they put it in small print, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because there was nothing there.

Here are some of the highlights. I'll give the government

some free advertising here.

Agriculture:: a commitment to continue to press for the elimination of predatory pricing and subsidized over-production of agriculture products.

That's okay, but what about the farmers that are going broke right now? Where's the announcement for the farmers who are going broke right now? Where is the income support? Where is the debt restructuring? It's not there. They're running around the world telling the European Economic Community, who has said that they'll never go hungry again, to stop producing. They're dreaming, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And another one, the second one:

Enhanced support for agricultural diversification through:

\$15 million in 1988 for irrigation-based economic development.

That's okay. But I ask the members opposite, have they talked to the irrigation farmers lately? The irrigation farmers are some of the guys who are in the biggest trouble because they can't get the value for their product, they can't sell all they're producing, and they're paying exorbitant fees for water and power and equipment. And this government, one of its highlights is, it's going to put \$15 million more into irrigation.

Well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if things were going good, I'd say hooray, that's great. But what about the people who are losing their farms and losing their land? It does nothing for them. And that's the highlight.

And I've already mentioned the new lending program for partnerships and corporation with regards to livestock operations. I don't have to repeat that.

And here's another one — "active negotiation with the federal government to create a world class centre for excellence of agriculture at research and technology at the University . . . " Good. Nothing wrong with that. If things were going good, I'd say hurrah, hurrah.

But what about the people who can't make their payments? What about people who the banks and the government is foreclosing upon? Does that help them, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Does that help them one little bit? That's the problem with this government. It says it's standing up for farmers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the reality is it is void of ideas for agriculture in this province.

Another one, Mr. Deputy Speaker, " . . . commitment to work with the federal government on soil conservation issues." Nothing wrong with that. But I'll tell you there's a little irony in that one, because while the government is committing itself to soil conservation, which we should do in this province, it's doing nothing to alleviate the pressure that farmers are being put under to produce and mine the soils. Isn't that ironic? They say they're going to conserve soil, but there is no programs to allow farmers to operate their farms in such a manner that they can

produce and harvest the soil and manage the soil on a long-term basis, because farmers have to mine their soil now to try to get enough production to pay their bills. It makes no sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Where are the priorities?

And then, "Continued support (it says ) for farms through (the) extension of the Counselling and Assistance . . . Program and Farmland Security Board." Mr. Deputy Speaker, the CAF program, with all due respect to those people who are administering and carrying it out, simply speeds up the process of foreclosing on farmers, and the government over there knows that. It speeds up.

And they're going to extend the repayment of the production loan. Need I say any more? I've said enough on that.

Maintain the farmers' royalty rebate, oil royalty rebate. They cut it last budget, in half, but they're going to maintain it this time. And what's that doing for those people who can't manage their debt? What's that doing for people who can't stay on their land and who are forced into mental stress? I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that doesn't work for me, and it doesn't work for the farmers of this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — I have to just interject for a minute, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to read a little report card on one of the members.

**An Hon. Member:** — Name him — Cut Knife-Lloyd.

**Mr. Upshall:** — The member, yes, is from Cut Knife-Lloydminster. And it says:

Our Saskatchewan MLA seems to have changed hats from that of visible politician to that of a behind the scenes cast member whose name is only mentioned when somebody else is at the microphone.

And the following is a short list of major local events and the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster's record of attendance at those events. This has got a lot to do with a member from rural Saskatchewan representing farmers and is supposed to be out there talking to them and is absolutely invisible because he knows the policies of this government are void of ideas.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — The record of attendance: January '87, Marcel Masse, border city visit, absent; June '87, Michael Wilson visit, absent; July '87, Canada Day celebrations, absent; August '87, Hereford display centre opening, absent; September '87, student conference, he managed to make that one; October, '87, George F. Baiten Day, Baiten's bridge opening, absent; October '87, horizontal drilling well unveiling. Oh, a drilling well unveiling, he was present at. I wonder why he was present at the drilling presentation and absent in his constituency on other occasions.

November '87, PC fundraiser, Upgrader address, absent; '88, John Gormley discusses free trade, absent. Maybe he could learn something. I doubt it though. January '88, Premier's supper at Maidstone, absent; January '88, Bill McKnight address, Two Hills, CoC (chamber of commerce), absent; February '88, Art Price address at the upgrader, absent; February '88, Don Mazankowski address at the upgrader, absent; February '88, Olympic torch relay, he made it to that one.

And the chamber president says, and I quote, "Michael hasn't been available a lot in the past." And I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is absolutely the reason, that's the reason that this government is so far out of touch with the people of this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — And I say it goes for nearly every member; I say it goes for nearly every member in the opposite bench.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Upshall:** — And if you sit back and look at the policies of this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on agriculture and the world economy, that is why these people are not in touch. They're out of touch with the people, and even if they do get in touch with them, they won't listen; they don't consult; they don't respond to the needs of the people in rural Saskatchewan.

Just to wind up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just to wind up, there's a little publication — I believe it came out about the first of March — *Farm Debt Capital and Income Review* — *Farm Debt Capital and Income Review*. This is a study by a Ralph Ashmead and a couple of other people. And this study says, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

Canadian farmers are saddled with \$4.11 in debt for every dollar they retain in net income.

Four dollars and eleven cents in debt for every dollar of net income for Canadian farmers. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what has this government, under this Premier, under the thumb of the Primer Minister of this country, who can't run his own affairs, what are they doing? They're increasing the interest rates. They're taking security. They're not managing the debt crisis. They're putting greater taxes on the people of this province. They're taking away the health care and the dental care. They're raising taxes, and they're paying their friends. They're paying off their friends.

And I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my estimation that is a sorrowful way to run government. The people of this province, out in rural Saskatchewan especially, know the truth. They know the difference between the truth and lies. And this government is trying desperately to hang onto that rural part of Saskatchewan with their rhetoric, with their garbage about deficiency payments and all other things like that — they're the only ones that could do it. Well I'll tell you, the people are seeing through that.

And the Premier can stand up and talk about families, rules of fairness, rules for decency, and rules to protect

families and, indeed, individuals. And I tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is not true. He's not doing it, and that's why the people don't trust him. And that's why I cannot stand in my place and support this budget.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Anguish:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to participate in the budget debate this evening. I am somewhat dismayed that the members on the government side refused to stand up and defend their budget. All evening, not one speaker from the government side of the House — a budget that the government is absolutely ashamed of, absolutely ashamed of. They're acknowledging . . . they're drawing to my attention, Mr. Speaker, the fact one member concluded his remarks this evening — the Minister of Highways concluded his remarks, but since that time not one speaker from the government side of the House. And it shows the shame that they must feel for the budget that was introduced by the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, the budget seemed to me to be a situation where I had never seen anyone take so long to say so little. Basically, he could have wrapped it up by saying Saskatchewan people are going to pay more while they receive less services, and some people in our society, those who have the most, will be paying a lesser share of the burden that this government has created for us.

I think it is worth drawing to people's attention this evening, Mr. Speaker, although it's been done many times before, the situation in the province of Saskatchewan where we had a balanced budget, a surplus budget at the end of the 1981-82 fiscal year. But since that time, since this government has come to office, every budget — 1982-82, '83-84, right up until the current budget introduced, is a deficit budget putting us into a position where we're paying almost a million dollars a day in interest alone just to service the debt. And think, Mr. Speaker, what a million dollars a day could do for agriculture in this province, what it could do for our education system in the province of Saskatchewan or, yes, what it could do for health care.

There are many things that we could address this evening in the budget debate, but I think that I will try and confine my remarks as much as possible, Mr. Speaker, to the whole area of health care in the province of Saskatchewan. We don't have to go into the history.

We all know that the medicare system that we have appreciated up until the last couple of years came into place in 1962 after very long and very dedicated work by some members of this political party who set against almost impossible odds, it seemed like at the time, that yes, we could have a health care system in the province of Saskatchewan where it wasn't a system where those that can pay the most get the best health care. We believed, and the people in this party prior to myself and others that sit here this evening believed, that you should have good quality health care regardless of your income or your financial status in life.

There were extensions to that program, of course, Mr. Speaker, since 1962, and the two that come to mind immediately are the school-based children's dental program, and secondly, the prescription drug plan.

In terms of the dental program in the province of Saskatchewan, it's been privatized — piratized is more accurate. The member from Moose Jaw North points that out quite capable. And now we find the utilization rate, especially of rural children in the dental program, to be far down from what it was under the dental program when it was school-based, and we had dental therapists and trained professionals to repair and to provide good dental hygiene for the young children of this province. We no longer have that in the province of Saskatchewan because of the privatization measure that the government has taken upon themselves.

and what we're leading to is again a system going back to the dark ages where those that have the money can pay for a level of care, and those that don't have the money don't get the care that they should be receiving. And it shows that the lack of compassion in this government is creating a great deal of mistrust with people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the prescription drug plan, other members have quite capably pointed out here this evening the very strenuous and devastating circumstances that have arisen by people who cannot afford to put money up front to purchase the prescription drugs that were prescribed to them by physicians in this province of Saskatchewan. They have to turn away from the drug store counter, walk out and look for funding to pay for the prescription drugs they need to sustain their health, in some cases life-sustaining drugs. In other cases they make decisions in repriorizing the meagre funding that they do have for their families — making a choice between food and their prescription drugs in many, many cases, Mr. Speaker.

We were told, I should say misled is more accurate, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial health care budget in the province of Saskatchewan increased this year over last by some \$66 million.

**An Hon. Member:** — Not true.

**Mr. Anguish:** — The member from Saskatoon Sutherland says not true, and he is absolutely right, Mr. Speaker. If you look at the bottom line in the budget documents, and you subtract last year's budget from this year's budget, it would appear that there's an increase of about \$66 million, in fact a little over \$65 million increase in health care spending . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Appearances are deceiving.

**Mr. Anguish:** — But appearances are deceiving, Mr. Speaker.

Let's look at a couple of examples as to why this is deceiving, and why people in the province of Saskatchewan are being misled, and why they're losing trust in the government sitting opposite and running this province into debt.

(2115)

Mr. Speaker, I would look at item number 22 under the health care budget, and it reads: "Grants to Hospitals — Repayment of principal and interest on capital loans from the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation." Last year, Mr. Speaker, \$4.5 million was budgeted. This year, Mr. Speaker, \$15.9 million is budgeted. But does that go into health care in the province of Saskatchewan? No, it doesn't go into health care. But it goes into paying money to a Saskatchewan Crown corporation which is a new invention by the Conservative administration in the province of Saskatchewan.

It used to be, Mr. Speaker, that the department of supply and service always provided plant and facilities for government departments to operate under and within those facilities. That's no longer the case. They abolished the department of supply and service and created the property management corporation, and therefore charge government departments for facilities that are utilized. Well some people might say that's good in principle. But what happens is that the people are being deceived in the province of Saskatchewan because on that one item they would say, well, the health care budget has gone up by \$11.4 million. Totally false, Mr. Speaker, because not one cent of that money goes into health care programs in the delivery of those programs to people who require the medical facilities in the province of Saskatchewan. And I say, shame on the government opposite for misleading the people in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Anguish:** — Another item . . . I'd look at item 17 in the budget, Mr. Speaker. We have: "Payments to Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation." And I would assume this would have to be for the rental of facilities of the Department of Health. They had an increase there, Mr. Speaker, of a little over a million, almost \$2 million. Does that money go into health care services and the delivery of those services to the people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? Does it? No, it doesn't.

So there, Mr. Speaker, just in those two items alone, we have 2 and 11, we have about \$13 million that has nothing to do with health care. It's a juggling of figures by this government opposite, Mr. Speaker, and I say shame on them again for misleading people in the province of Saskatchewan.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, to address a very delicate subject in the legislature this evening during the budget debate, and that is one of the whole question of abortion. Abortion is dealt with, with great sensitivity on both sides of this legislature, in fact, throughout the country as a whole, it's a topic which arouses great emotions in people on all extremes of the abortion issues.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to say that the topic of abortion is not something I and my spouse gave a great deal of thought to before I entered a political life. It was something that we assumed that no one would want. Why would anyone want abortion? But I found, Mr. Speaker, that when I got involved in the political forum, people, like those politicians opposite, would try and paint people into corners as if it was a black and white

issue. You were either anti-abortion or you were pro-abortion. And, Mr. Speaker, I would want to say this evening that it's not a black and white issue — absolutely not a black and white issue.

Mr. Speaker, my spouse and I finally had to sit down and discuss between us what the abortion issue meant to us as individual citizens of Saskatchewan and this great country, Canada, because we felt a responsibility to let constituents and people in the public know where we stood on the issue. and I'm going to lay that out this evening, because the members opposite have not laid out, in fact, where they stand on the abortion issue. They prefer to hide their heads in the sand and cast aspersions and accusations on something that should be dealt with very seriously, and not to try and make great political gain out of something that's a very serious issue with our society, Mr. Speaker.

Well finally, through discussions and through discussions with the public and with our own family, I decided that I didn't like abortion very much, just as I had found that many people I talked to did not like abortion, Mr. Speaker. And I suppose what it came down to for me was that it was so clear that it was not a black and white issue because there were situations where I could not tell someone no, you cannot have an abortion.

And I want to point out a couple of instances, Mr. Speaker, this evening. For example, if my spouse came to me and said Doug, I'm going to die if I carry through with this pregnancy, I wouldn't be able to tell her no, you can't have an abortion. And I challenge members opposite: which one of you could stand and say to your spouse, you die rather than abort? Which ones of the members opposite could do that in all of your hypocrisy sitting over there on that side of the House?

Or we have daughters in our family, Mr. Speaker. In the case of an attack or a rape situation, I would not be able to tell one of my daughters absolutely no, you can't have an abortion. I could not inflict that kind of control and that lack of compassion over members of my family.

And, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite stand up and say so sanctimoniously that they're all pro-life, that they're against abortion in every situation is what they want to lead people to believe. Well is that so, Mr. Speaker? Let's see what happens in practice.

First off, the government opposite takes birth control pills out of the prescription drug plan. Many, many people, especially low-income people and single parents rely on birth control pills. What do they do? For people who can't afford them, they virtually take away one of the methods of birth control for many, many individuals in our society, Mr. Speaker.

Secondly, what do they do? They cut funding to groups that want to promote information about sexuality and pregnancy and how you raise a good family in support of strong families in Saskatchewan and Canada. They take that funding away, Mr. Speaker.

And what's the worst sin of all, Mr. Speaker? The worst sin of all is they say they're absolutely pro-life in every case

over there. That's what they say to the media; that's what they perpetuate. But when the child is born into a poor family, in many cases a single-parent family, they've cut the levels of support so low that families are virtually on the verge of starvation. They resort to food banks and begging for food, school lunch programs. That's a betrayal of families in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, an absolute betrayal of families in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Anguish:** — The federal law, Mr. Speaker, under which abortions were governed, was controversial for a long period of time. Many people supported the law; many people wanted the law changed to make it easier for abortions; many people wanted it taken out so it would be impossible to get abortions in our society, Mr. Speaker.

The Supreme Court, thanks to some politicians turning over more and more and more authority that legislators and parliamentarians should have, turning it over to the courts, the Supreme Court struck down the abortion law in Canada. And what happened?

Well the Premier in the province of Saskatchewan said, we'll fund abortions. And then he said, no, we won't fund all abortions, we'll fund some abortions, we won't fund other abortions; we won't tell you which ones will be funded, but we'll leave that up to the physicians in the province of Saskatchewan as to which abortions get funded and which ones don't. So they say pro-life, but then they still want to fund abortions, so which is it on that side of the House? What is your policy on the abortion question in the province of Saskatchewan?

You have the right to let people know. You're the governors of the province. You're the people who set the legislation, and you sit by and hide your heads in the sand waiting for one of your federal colleagues to change the law, or bring in a new law with a notwithstanding clause so that there'll be some governance of the whole abortion question again in Canada.

Now which of those members opposite support the position of one Barbara McDougall, a member of the Privy Council, a cabinet minister in Mr. Mulroney's government? She recently had an interview which she's quoted, and she's referring to abortion, Mr. Speaker.

This is a moral choice. There is no getting around it, and the only one who is really qualified to make that choice is the woman to whose body this little thing is attached.

Is that the position of the members opposite? This little thing attached, is that the position of the members opposite? Stand up and be counted alongside Barbara McDougall, or state your own position. What are you to do? The sanctimonious babbling on the side opposite — no one knows what your true position is. Your rhetoric is wearing very, very thin. and, Mr. Speaker, the people in the province of Saskatchewan will bring them to task in the very near future.

(2130)

Mr. Speaker, this is a delicate situation, and I would encourage all members on both sides of the House to do some soul-searching about this very serious issue. We can't run and hide our heads in the sand. People elected us to make decisions.

I've pointed out what my personal position is here this evening, Mr. Speaker. The government doesn't care to do that; they don't care to take action. But I don't want to get into a squabble of, what's your position, what's your position — arguing back and forth. The government has a responsibility to, very clearly, take action on this issue, and we want, along with many people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, to see the government take action on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to conclude by saying how disappointed I am in the government, as many of my constituents are, as they've told me. The lack of action in agriculture, although they spent horrendous sums of money, the agricultural situation is getting worse and worse. Health care — very serious situation again, Mr. Speaker. The government is not listening to people in the province of Saskatchewan on the growing waiting lists. The education system is underfunded, Mr. Speaker. and the government plays with figures in their budget, not telling the whole story to people in the province of Saskatchewan, relying on rhetoric and little action.

And I would say, Mr. Speaker, that if the government wants to hear a clear message from the people in the province of Saskatchewan, they should call the by-elections in Regina Elphinstone and Saskatoon Eastview, and people in Saskatchewan will speak very clearly to them in defeating them soundly in both of those by-elections, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Goulet:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll be dealing with the issues in relation to the general budget and the general issues that come from it. I'll also deal with the issue of the budget as it relates to the North and also the budget as it relates to Indian and Métis people.

In general, as I listened to the budget speech, Mr. Speaker, again I found that there was very little in there for ordinary people.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Goulet:** — There was little in there for people in northern Saskatchewan, and there was little in there for Indian and Métis people of Saskatchewan. I have seen the same formula used in regards to this budget. There is less services for people, and at the same time more money taken from the pockets of the people. And as I looked at the whole issue of the deficit in general — we now have a deficit of \$3.7 billion — I look at that deficit figure and that's an interest rate of \$329 million per year — that's \$329 million. That's the interest rate. What that means, Mr. Speaker, is that we're paying so much money to the banks and the large scale corporations that this figure, this interest rate figure, is twice what we spend in agriculture

in this province. It's over 300 times what we spend in Indian economic development. It is a tremendous, tremendous figure and a tremendous burden for the people of this province.

As I looked at other aspects of the budget, I looked at the Highways budget. In northern Saskatchewan we have been working at trying to improve the Hanson Lake Road, Highway 102 north and 905. There's highway improvements that are required from 102 to Grandmother's Bay. There's highway improvement and a request for highways from Cumberland House to the mine where people could work, just 25 miles away. There's requests for roads to be built this past year and improvements, let's say, at the Muskoday Indian Reserve so that people could have a walkway on that bridge going across and to have proper lighting on that bridge. But we haven't heard anything — not a thing. There was supposed to be a road improvement from the main highway to the James Smith Reserve — but nothing, absolutely nothing. We looked at the highway system on the north-west side of the province, as we see throughout the province. What we see is a cut-back situation of \$4 million. Highways have been cut back.

When a lot of people in northern Saskatchewan have talked to me about the need for improving the road, at the same time this government brags about the new deal which will lead to privatization which we have to pay for, SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) Eldor Resource, and the requirement for a road in that area, the people don't even build one mile on that Highway No. 102 north.

Here we have 48,000 pounds in regards to the transporting of hazardous chemicals like cyanide that are being transferred on this road, and there's a record number of accidents because there's not only a lack of improvement, there's even a lack and a cut-back on maintenance on that highway. Not only do more people die on the road, but there are more spills of hazardous chemicals.

And what do we see from this PC government? We see complete neglect and a complete lack of concern, not only on the safety of people as they travel on the roads in northern Saskatchewan, but on the fact that more dangerous chemicals can be spilt on that road. There is no money for the road in the northern area — no mention.

As I look at another aspect of the budget, in the general terms of an issue that strikes at the very heart of every individual in this province, something that, when we look back at the history of last year, we know one thing — that health had to be the number one issue of this province. We saw for the first time in the history of Saskatchewan, 100,000 names put on a petition in direct regards to the policy and practice of this government in regards to health and erosion of medicare, especially in the year when we had celebrated the 25th anniversary of medicare.

There was the road to privatization of the dental plan; there was the fact that the drug plan had affected the very nature of how people would relate to government in regards to the health care system; that the prescription

drug plan brought untold hardship for many people, Mr. Speaker.

But when the debate came — and I would like to mention this again; it's a very important point — when the laws were changed last June to bring into play this new prescription drug plan, many people were very struck by the fact that they would have to have money out front — \$40 here, \$100 here, \$150 there. In a situation where you have 60 to 80 per cent unemployment at the community level, where the up-front money and the up-front cash is not so readily available as we would have in the urban centres, here you have a case where a lot of the people decided . . . when they went into the drug store they made a decision sometimes to turn away because they didn't have enough money to buy their drugs.

And that to me is a sad situation, especially when it's historically recognized that Saskatchewan was one of the tremendous leaders in this world in regards to health care. We have come down to a situation where people couldn't get health care because of policies brought in by this government. The drug plan to this day, with the reflection of the people's own thinking last year, a lot of the people thought, yes, I think maybe the government will change its mind. But when I looked at this budget speech, there was absolutely no change, absolutely no change in regards to the issue of the drug plan.

All we got was the aspect of a task force. And we know that the task force is just another excuse for cutting back. We know that a lot of genuine people out there want a good strong task force. They have a strong feeling because of the tradition of this province, they have a strong tradition of building up and improving on our health care system, and they genuinely feel that a task force would be good. But they see the record of this government and they see the fact that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

The member from across has asked me to, so I'll beg — because it's getting close to the time — beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:45 p.m.