

April 14, 1988

## EVENING SITTING

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

## Motions for Interim Supply (continued)

**Ms. Smart:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thought perhaps tonight when the Deputy Premier says that I was standing up to speak, he might stand up and try to adjourn the House, because he knows that I was on the speaking list the other evening when he decided that he would close down the legislature rather than to give me my chance to address the Assembly on private members' day.

**An Hon. Member:** — Undemocratic.

**Ms. Smart:** — It certainly was undemocratic and it certainly says something about closing down our freedom of speech in this legislature when we have the time to address the concerns of our constituency.

Mr. Chairman, tonight we are debating an interim supply Bill, a government supply Bill, and certainly those of us on this side of the House have no intention of voting against this Bill because we realize that the needs of government must proceed. But before we get to the vote on this issue . . . I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if you could get the boys across the way to be a little more quiet so I could have some order, so that I could speak in this legislature.

Speaking to this interim supply Bill gives me a chance to make some statements on the budget in general, because it's part of the budget tonight that we are going to be voting on, and it's very important that those of us, particularly who haven't had a chance to reply to the budget speech at this point, have an opportunity to say some of the things that are important to us and to our constituents.

Mr. Chairman, this was a budget prepared by a Minister of Finance who has demonstrated clearly to those of us in this legislature that he can't read a balance sheet, that he doesn't understand audited statements, that he doesn't care that people get hurt by his government's total failure to enforce legislation and regulations of this province. And that's a serious charge that I make, Mr. Chairman, but I make it particularly in view of the 6,700 depositors from Principal Group.

And I want to say that they particularly have learned how little confidence they can have in the Minister of Finance and in his cabinet colleagues who have kept passing the buck literally between them, as to who is responsible for answering to this issue. They won't take the responsibility for not being able to understand the balance sheets and the audited statements. They won't take the responsibility for the fact that Cormie has said that they misled the people with the annual review that he put forward from people with the annual review that he put forward from Principal Group, and they won't face the fact that it's this government in the province of Saskatchewan responsible for monitoring The Investment Contracts Act under which this fiasco has taken place. And there's 6,700 people in this province who've been badly hurt by the Minister of Finance's inability to function properly as a government

representative.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — I say the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Consumer Affairs have been passing the buck on this issue. And they've also been passing the bucks among themselves, as friends, and the budget certainly reflects that.

This is also a Minister of Finance who has stated publicly, Mr. Chairman, that he feels he has a right as a politician to mislead people, to deceive people, and to betray people. And I find that absolutely shocking. But what is also shocking, Mr. Chairman, and I know it shocks the people in Saskatoon Centre and people in Saskatoon Eastview whom I've been talking to lately as I've been knocking on doors, that the Minister of Finance, along with his other cabinet colleagues, has demonstrated that he's just another one of the little boys in the school yard who get a big bang out of name-calling and insults. Many of the members opposite, all of them in an adult manner and with statesmanlike dignity, elected by the people of Saskatchewan — they've demonstrated that the only level of debate that they're capable of presenting in this House to the people of this province is the level of the elementary school yard at recess-time.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — And I want, on behalf of the constituents in Saskatoon Centre, to express my extreme disappointment at the level of discussion in this legislature, not only defending the budget, but also debating all the other motions and issues that have come before us. And I think particularly the Minister of Finance's performances in this House are as pathetic as his budget and as his justification for the budget.

The people I've been talking to are horrified, as I've said, by the insults and the hate mongering, by the double-talk and the deception, and by the total lack of competence and compassion shown by the PC government to the people of Saskatchewan. And I know that grass-roots PCs are turning away in droves, and so they should. The government opposite deserves to be abandoned completely, to sink itself in its own dirty mud hole, and I trust the voters in Elphinstone and Eastview will do just that.

Mr. Chairman, I have been asked by the Leader of the Opposition to be the critic for seniors' issues. They're not a department of seniors, but there are very many seniors in this province, and my emphasis in my new critic area is to . . . I'm meeting as many older people as possible, both individually and as representatives of senior organizations.

I represent, as I've said often in this House, a constituency where one-third of the people are over the age of 60, and I know that they've been bringing to me a great number of their concerns.

In my constituency and across this province there are

people living on very low incomes who are seniors — not all seniors, but a great number of them. And I notice that in the budget this government effected in November, which is a long way from now in April, will be giving a \$15 increase to the senior citizens' income supplement — \$15, Mr. Chairman. That apparently is to ensure a minimum income of nearly 10,000 per year, and that, Mr. Chairman, is just at the poverty level for people living in Saskatoon and in the big cities.

Now I know from talking to seniors that many seniors are better off than that, and many seniors are saying, we're all right, but we're terribly worried about the younger generation. They're worried because they see the programs that they have worked so hard to build up over the years in this province being destroyed. Programs that they put in place for the benefit of their children and their grandchildren. And there is a great sorrow out there in this province to see that many, many programs that this government is not funding and not supporting and is actively destroying. And I've said this before in the throne speech, and I will say every time I have an opportunity in this House to express the seniors' great disappointment, that whereas they're the ones that have built this province, they are watching what they built demolished.

And I want to go back now to the many of them who have an income just at the poverty line or below in order to manage their finances here in Saskatchewan. And it was with some sadness that I joined the pensioner who was demonstrating in front of the legislature yesterday and today and who says that he's going to go on being in front of the legislature with his pamphlet, pointing out the fact that in this latest budget, and last year, the government members opposite would do nothing to increase the superannuated pensioners' fund.

Now this is a fund, Mr. Chairman, which has been increased every year for the last 15 years to cover the cost of inflation or to help the seniors to manage to finance their homes and their food and their clothing. But for the last 20 months there's been no increase in that pension — absolutely no increase. And this is people who are being pensioned on what's called "the old plan," where very often they were working for a salary that's really quite low and they're pensioned off on 70 per cent of that salary. They very much want that pension which they've contributed to over the years to help them to be able to fund their costs and to live independently into their old age. But this is not happening. That's another 6,000 people in this province very bitterly disappointed with this government.

And whereas this government in the budget provides a \$15 increase to come up in next November, the government has thought nothing of increasing the taxes in this province to the point where the seniors and other people on low incomes are groaning under the burden of it.

The flat tax up to 2 per cent, largely responsible for Saskatchewan taxpayers being burdened with the highest income taxes in western Canada. And the flat tax hits seniors. The property taxes are up, and that hurts seniors so badly. So many of them on fixed incomes, living in their own homes, particularly in my constituency; I meet

them every day. They don't know how long they're going to be able to afford to stay in their houses.

You've reduced the payments to the municipalities, and that means the property taxes will have to go up. And it's so ironic to me to see you say you're going to increase the cost of home care, increase the budget of home care, and at the same time, put municipalities in the position where they have to increase the municipal tax, which means that people may not be able to stay in their own homes.

There's sky-rocketing utility rates, and many of my colleagues have mentioned this. Since 1982 the telephone services have increased 23 per cent. This from a government that promised free telephones to seniors. And that's just a small example of how I say this government has betrayed the people of Saskatchewan. They made a promise to the seniors that this is what they would do, and yet the telephone service has increased 23 per cent.

Home heating costs have increased since 1982 by 55 per cent; electricity by 51 per cent; car insurance by 37 per cent; and now we get large increases for our registration. Perhaps the government opposite members think that seniors shouldn't drive cars. Perhaps you think that somehow with their \$15 a month more that they're going to get next November, they're going to be able to afford the increases in their licences and registration. But by cutting back on the municipal taxes, you've even cut back on the opportunity for the municipalities, of cities like Saskatoon, to provide public transportation, and that hurts the seniors.

And there are also the hidden expenses, what we call the hidden taxes. Over 230 fees for public services, many of which are valuable to older people, have been increased. And now we have an article in the *Star-Phoenix* just last month, "Saskatoon's a nice city but it's costly, costly," and it's a report on the inflation rate for Saskatoon. At 6.3 per cent inflation, Saskatoon's rate in February continued to be the highest of major Canadian cities, according to StatsCanada Figures. We've got higher costs for food, clothing, gasoline, and prescription drugs, and they're contributing factors to the annual increase.

We have food prices 20 per cent of the cost of living index. It rose 2.5 per cent in Regina and 4.2 per cent in Saskatoon. And this government gives people \$15 a month extra in next November to help pay for these costs that people are incurring right now. It's so sad, it's so unfair.

(1915)

I want particularly to refer to the prescription drug prices because this is the area where we are experiencing a lot of concern among the sick and particularly, among the seniors. The prescription drug prices have already risen 20 per cent in Regina from a year ago and 27.7 per cent in Saskatoon, reflecting the out-of-pocket costs of the new drug plan without the rebate. This destruction of the drug plan means that now 60 per cent of families in Saskatchewan will be paying 100 per cent of their drug costs, another 30 per cent are paying 50 per cent of their drug costs, and 10 per cent of those needing more than 20

prescriptions a year will still pay 34 per cent of their drug costs.

Looking at the drug plan budget estimates for 1986-87 and '87-88, I was shocked to see that there was a shift of at least \$26 million from the drug plan onto the shoulders of the consumers. That's a \$26 million tax on the sick. And now in this new budget that's come forward in 1988-89, another cut to the drug plan — nearly \$7 million less available from this government for needed medication. And I say that this is a drug plan and a cost increase being borne by the sick and the elderly from a government that is irresponsible, it's uncaring, and it's incompetent.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — I've talked to people in my constituency, Mr. Chairman, who are on heart drugs. And this has got to be the one area where the most increases in prescription drugs are being experienced. I have couples in my constituency who are both on heart medication and they've got bills of 4 and \$500 every month for their drugs. But the government opposite seems to want to present these as whingy senior citizens who are going about indulging themselves in drugs and abusing the system and spacing out on heart medication. And it is taking six to eight weeks for the rebate, so people have to get their next prescription long before they get their rebates.

This is a very serious situation because some people are taking less of their medication trying to make it stretch. The only people who are getting any compensation from this government are the ones that phone up and complain. They have to do a lot of complaining, a lot of phoning, a lot of putting the pressure on the drug plan before they get their rebates. How many people, how many of the people who are sick and elderly in this province know that there is a form to fill out that they can apply for a faster service on the drug plan? I don't think there are very many because it hasn't been well advertised. And I know that I have a lot of constituents, I have a lot of constituents in my constituency who don't know that those forms exist.

Now the government opposite is laughing and saying that they . . . you know, how many? I know that if we hadn't sent those drug plans out to people, they wouldn't be able to get them. And I resent a government that can only function if the opposition brings individual cases to their attention. That is not the way to govern this province, to do it that way.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — You want the names of the hungry children. You can't go to the schools and find out that this situation exists. You want the names of the seniors who are sick and paying high drug costs — you want their individual names. You want the names of everybody that's on the hospital lists in Saskatoon and Regina or you're not going to do anything. What kind of a government functions like that, I ask you?

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

**Ms. Smart:** — I think that's a shame to have a government like that. There are many people across this province who don't contact . . . who are left alone. I have been in a nursing home in Saskatoon where many people speak Ukrainian, and they've been having trouble dealing with the drug forms and knowing what their rights are.

**An Hon. Member:** — They're all my supporters too.

**Ms. Smart:** — Oh the member for Saskatoon Mayfair says they're all his supporters. Well I've got news for him. That's certainly not what I've been hearing, not one bit, not one bit.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — They are part of the seniors who are so terribly unhappy with the kinds of destruction of the system that they've worked so hard to build up here.

And I want to continue talking about the increase in drug costs with seniors around this province because I want them to know that on this side of the House we are going to continue to raise that issue because it is a very serious issue, not only for the people who can't pay for the drugs, but for the destruction that you've done already to the medicare system that we have here in Saskatchewan.

And it's not lost on the people of Saskatchewan the terrific irony of the kind of destruction that you've done to the drug plan and the high costs that you've made people incur after . . . before you've actually come forward with the task force to study the future of medicare. That has got to be the silliest kind of a way to govern — to do destructive things, to break down programs that people have worked hard to build up and then to turn around and say, oh, we better study this and see if it's a good thing. I can tell you, it's not a good thing. I can tell you, the seniors are very concerned and so are the people with chronic illness who are facing very high bills.

And the other issue that I want to address, Mr. Chairman, in speaking to this budget speech isn't . . .

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

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Mr. Chairman, with the indulgence of the members of the House, I would like to apologize to the member for interrupting; but I would like to make an introduction if I have the leave.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Neudorf:** — I take a great deal of pleasure at this time to introduce two people in the government galleries: Mrs. Connie Blacklock and Mr. John Schreiner, who are both directors on the board of Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan. ACS, and do an awful lot of work for the farmers of Saskatchewan. And I would like both of you to know that it is greatly appreciated.

And while I'm on my feet, I might just add that Mr. Schreiner happens also to be the president of the PC Party in my constituency, and we also appreciate that work that

he does for us.

And in conclusion I would just like to say that that is one president that is not going to resign. I ask you to welcome them.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Motions for Interim Supply (continued)

**Ms. Smart:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well that was a very interesting break in my presentation, because it just came at the right time for me. I've been talking about the concern that seniors have about the high costs that they're facing as a result of this government and this Minister of Finance's budget, and now I want to turn to another area that I'm very concerned about, and I want to turn to it linking it with the drug prescription plan.

The other area that I want to speak to is the issue of family support. And that's because I represent a constituency where another one-third of the people are between the ages of 20 and 29. And I have a very high level of families in my constituency who are single-parent families.

And I want to talk about what this budget and what this government has been doing to families, from my perspective. The most alarming circumstances in which both the health and the welfare of women and teenagers is threatened by the drug plan changes is the whole area of birth control and contraception.

Now many people don't realize that the government opposite have not taken oral contraception out of the drug plan entirely. And oral contraceptives, I'm told by a doctor, now cost \$15 a month or \$180 a year. And I want to know how many people they think . . . how many teenagers have access to the \$30 needed for an initial year to spend on birth control pills, and even more disturbingly, how many of them can be open enough with their parents to submit their contraceptive bills to the family for reimbursement on a family claim submission.

We are facing, as we've said, a crisis in unplanned and unwanted pregnancies in this province, and pricing birth control beyond the reach of low-income women or teenagers is a sure and a certain formula to make things worse.

One in four of the people in this province live in poverty and many of those are women. You only have to realize that 70 per cent of the minimum wage-earners are women, and they earn approximately \$756 a month on the minimum wage. And even without dependents, a woman on the minimum wage lives significantly below the poverty line, Mr. Chairman. If you add children to the burden that she carries, it's clear that extra money for medication or contraceptives is beyond the reach of many of the working poor, most of whom are women, and most of whom use health services disproportionately more because of their reproductive functions and their mothering roles and because of their children's medical needs.

Now I find it terribly sad and ironic that the Minister of Social Services will provide details of a new program called "families matter" which will encourage community agencies to develop innovative programs that promote positive parenting. Now, Mr. Chairman, is taking away the money from the oral contraception, putting that so high, is that a way to support positive parenting, taking away access to birth control information and birth control services? It's one way to support positive parenting, but it's not in a way that we would support on this side of the House, and it certainly is not a way to support the families who are struggling so hard to make ends meet with this budget.

I'm very afraid for those people. I'm very concerned about the fact that so many young women who want to keep their own children and become single parents are being so badly punished by this government.

Now I remember when birth control was illegal in Canada, and I know that what used to happen in the good old days was that people had to get married. When young women found themselves pregnant, they had two choices: shotgun wedding or go off to another community far away from home, have a baby with no one knowing what had happened, come up with some excuse about where they'd gone, and put the child up for adoption. And there are many of us who remember those days.

**An Hon. Member:** — All you brave men think it's a real joke don't you?

**Ms. Smart:** — Look it, they're laughing.

**An Hon. Member:** — Big joke.

**Ms. Smart:** — It's a joke, isn't it? Ha, ha! They are laughing. Isn't that sad? Isn't that sad?

Do you know that the statistics show — we talk about the increase in teenage pregnancies in Saskatchewan right now — the statistics show that the number of teenage pregnancies was a lot higher in the good old days, but it doesn't show up because the women were married. There's actually a decrease in the number of young women having children in Saskatchewan today, but they're called teenage mothers because they choose not to have shotgun weddings. They choose very often to keep their children, and I think they should have that choice with our support.

I think we should be very careful, though, that we also provide opportunities for women to get information to control unwanted pregnancies. And this government is doing nothing about that, absolutely nothing.

There's no money for sex education and birth control information and services. There's very little money for teen-age women to get the kinds of help that they need, and women who do choose to keep their children, out of love and concern for them, have to live through a life of poverty because they've made that choice. And I think we can do better than that in this province, a lot better than that. And we can certainly do a lot better than sit there and

laugh at the issues that I'm talking about, because you may not think they're serious, but there's an awful lot of women in this province who take it very seriously. And I for one am going to be a person in this legislature who raises these issues and points out that you're not doing anything to help women and children.

You haven't given enough money for day care. You haven't raised the subsidies in day care for six years. You're giving only \$235 per month for day-care services, and the cost to families now is \$340 per month per child. And I know that I have constituents who are searching desperately for good child care. They're not getting it; they're not getting the support that they deserve, and the children are not getting the support that they deserve.

(1930)

And you say you value families, and yet you won't do anything about the hungry children, and you're not doing anything to help the mothers, the young mothers in this province. You want to help them give their babies up for adoption, but that's been a choice that many women have resisted from the time immemorial. That's a very painful choice, and I think they should have better access to child care so that if they choose to keep their children, they can do it with dignity.

You say you're going to bring in new standards for child care, and yet you've reduced the budget for the staff who monitor the quality of day care by \$70,000. And yet you say you're going to give parents a choice — you're going to give them a choice of private day care, which will cost an arm and a leg, or a choice of staying home with their children and getting a tax credit. And that's no choice for many women in this province today. It may be a choice for the wealthy women that you want to provide services for, but it's not a choice for many of the women in Saskatoon Centre constituency.

What you do with these women is put them into job-training programs, and you've admitted in the budget speech that more than half of these trainees have been single parents who you say have received special allowances to cover child-care costs and other expenses related to the participation in the programs that you provided.

Let me tell you what you're doing. You're saying that women with babies who are four months old are now single, employable women, and they have to go back to work, while you want to give choices to families and lots of opportunity for women who already have money. You say single-parent women have to go back to work when their babies are four months old. And that's shameful, because there's no child care available properly for children of that young age.

And again I have people coming to my office and saying, I can't find child care or I have to leave my child in a situation that's really grim, but I have to go back to work because this government opposite says I'm employable with a four month old baby — still a nursing mother. And this government opposite will have them going back to work full time in order to get minimum wage, in order to get \$700 a month, in order to pay 400, \$500 rent. It

doesn't make sense to me. It's terribly cruel.

So there's nothing that this government can say that would make me believe that they have any sense of what it means to support families.

They talk about the New Careers Corporation and the fact that they've had a project, a major restoration of the eroded river bank in Saskatoon from the Meewasin Valley Authority. And one of the teams of workers on that project, picking rocks on the banks of the Saskatchewan River, were women. Again, single women — often single, employable women or single women with children, labelled employable — picking rocks all day long. A number of them have had injuries. A number of them have been hurt. A number of them . . . and then none of them get the amount of money they need in order to survive.

It's cruel; it's not a support for families. It's a budget that hurts people, ordinary people, in all the ways that my colleagues have pointed out in this House, both debating the budget and in debating this interim supply Bill. I think the members opposite should be really ashamed of bringing forward a budget that vies so much to people who already have money, and gives so little to the people who are already hurting — except higher taxes, higher fees, higher rates of payment that they have to make on services — from a government that has promised them otherwise and betrayed them badly.

And I reluctantly will support the interim supply Bill, but I certainly wish that this government had done far more for the very deserving people of this province, the people that I represent in Saskatoon Centre whose concerns deserve to be taken very seriously because they're the ones that are hurting badly for this government's policies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for recognizing me and giving me the opportunity to participate in this debate on the Appropriation Bill on interim supply.

And, Mr. Chairman, I want to say from the outset that the previous speaker, I think, very clearly indicated to the House that in the area of women and teenagers this government is a very uncaring government. It's a government that is callous when it comes to the needy and those who cannot help themselves, but is very luxurious and generous to those who have money of their own and are fairly well off. This budget that was brought forward and approved last week, Mr. Chairman, is a budget that should never have been brought to this Assembly. It's a budget that simply does not address the problems, and the interim supply therefore does not address the problems either. But reluctantly we will have to support the interim supply so the activities of the provinces can be carried on.

Mr. Chairman, I want to let the House know that over the supper hour I had a couple of calls from constituencies represented by the members opposite. And I will be referring to those, and I will be referring to those in my

speech just a little bit later.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend my time this evening, in the few moments that I have, on education and indicate very clearly to the people of Saskatchewan that the people were disappointed, the people were . . . The hypocrisy of the government is shown in its allocation of funds to education.

We all know that before the budget was brought in the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education and the Premier said that education would get a high priority, that this budget would rectify the things in education. And what have we seen, Mr. Speaker? We have seen an allocation to education which gave some — and I say some — school boards an increase of a little over 2 per cent, but many school boards received a substantial reduction. I am told, although I haven't got it on . . . haven't got the actual evidence here, that the Regina Public School Board will receive a reduction of \$700,000; the Regina Separate School Board, a reduction of \$100,000. We heard this afternoon, and I read in the *Star-Phoenix*, that the public school board received a reduction of \$513,000 in this budget. The separate school board did not receive a reduction because they had a substantial increase did they receive an increase.

What the minister did, opposite, and what the government opposite did was that for the cities they went and increased the computational mill rate and said, now that your assessment is higher, you can therefore raise more money locally, and therefore we're going to cut back your operating grants. Well isn't that being nice and generous of you people — tax it on the local people, saying to the people in Saskatoon, now we're going to tax you some more.

And the lone member from Mayfair obviously doesn't support the city of Saskatoon because we never hear of him in the debate. He seems to support all the things that go against Saskatoon, and he won't even answer questions directed to him on his department. But, Mr. Chairman, I want to say this: one member like that is just one too many for Saskatoon. We don't need any more like that.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — And I say to the member opposite that Saskatoon Eastview will make that very clear to you in the next few weeks.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman . . . yes, Mr. Chairman, I do get annoyed; I do get annoyed when our representatives from Saskatoon, no matter what side of the House they sit, don't support Saskatoon and speak for Saskatoon in the allocation of funds in our budget. I get annoyed when we get penalized in Saskatoon because we run an efficient government, and the minister opposite, the Minister of Finance, says, well I'm reducing my . . . I'm reducing our deficit, now I want the people at the local level to tighten

their belt. That's of utter hog-wash, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — He didn't tighten his belt — didn't tighten his belt at all.

What does the budget say? He gets 100 per cent increase on the equalization from the federal government — that's how he's going to reduce it, number one.

Number two, he makes a substantial shift in income tax to the local people and property tax to the local people, and he says, but we are tightening our belts. That's absolute nonsense, absolute nonsense, Mr. Speaker. And the people of this province are going to speak very shortly on this in the two by-elections. They'll tell you exactly what they think of your kind of budgeting and tax shifts.

Yes, Mr. Chairman, if I seem annoyed, I am annoyed because all day today I have heard from the people out there. I have heard from the people in Saskatoon, I've heard from the people in Yorkton, I've heard from the people in Sturgis, I've from the people in Stenen who are all upset because of the increases.

Yorkton, for example, I'll give you an example. Yorkton for example. Yes, Minister of Education, Yorkton today in the paper said they are going to have to let three teachers go because of your generosity. Yorkton said they had . . . ;Yorkton Regional High School are shutting down five courses next year that will no longer be available to those students. Economics won't be available; law won't be available; psychology won't be available; machining won't be available — all because of your generosity — shifting the burden from your shoulders onto the local taxpayers and saying to them that you, the people out there, are being irresponsible. You are the guys that are irresponsible in your lavish spending on all the others but not on our own people.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — People from Stenen phoned me today, asked me if I could do something to save their school. The people from Stenen and their . . . I'll say to the minister opposite — and this is exactly what they said to me — that the Sturgis School unit had to close down three schools because of the lack of funding from the Minister of Education. That's what they told me today. That's what they told me today.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — And they asked me, Mr. Minister, to make that message loud and clear to you in this House, and that's exactly what I'm doing right now.

Mr. Minister, there are many others, there are many other areas in this province where the courses have to be eliminated because of the lack of funding that you are making available.

Dr. Lowell Loewen, from Saskatoon, certainly no supporter of this party. This is what he has to say about your generosity:

Board members (he said) unanimously approved a budget Tuesday evening, although they did not debate the distribution of the funds, many expressed anger that the provincial government's contribution of 28.6 million is 295,000 less than offered last year. It's the second consecutive year the provincial contribution has dropped by 1 per cent.

And that is from a member of the Saskatoon Public School Board.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are many indications here where people say that, and here's Dr. Lowell again. He said:

The burden of paying for education has shifted from a 50-50 split between government and taxpayers, evident in the mid-1970s, to rely more and more heavily every year on property owners.

Mr. Chairman, when you take into consideration the property improvement grant that was paid in the 1970s, the provincial government at that time paid 74 per cent — 74 per cent of the cost of education in this province from K to 12. What is happening today? Instead of 74 per cent in Saskatoon, the public school board only receives 33 per cent from this government. That's how the burden of taxation has shifted, that's how it has shifted.

And they call themselves a caring and honest government. Caring for who? Who are they supporting? Certain you're not supporting the taxpayers at the local level. And I say to the member up in the gallery, if that's the kind of support that they want in Saskatoon area, well just continue because the people around that area are thinking a lot differently than that, a lot differently.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — There are a lot of angry people out there. There are a lot of angry people out there because they were deceived. They were deceived by the Minister of Education; they were deceived by the Premier. When the Premier promised them that he would take care of their needs in education, he simply was not honest with them. He simply was not honest because education did not get that priority.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that this Minister of Education, as I indicated the other day, this is his third portfolio, and it must be probably his worst influence and his worst performance that we have seen, because he obviously didn't have any influence. He obviously didn't have any influence because otherwise there would have been a greater increase for education. What happened to the EDF (educational development fund) fund, the education development fund, which really helped the schools in rural Saskatchewan?

**An Hon. Member:** — Who brought that in?

(1945)

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Yes, you people brought it in, but you

people also said, you people also promised the people out there that it would be a five-year program and you could plan accordingly. And that's exactly what the people did. They took you at your word. You said five years, and then you turn around and unilaterally change it and make it 10 years, wipe out many of the programs that the school divisions in rural Saskatchewan had planned. Many of them were wiped out.

I say to the member from Saskatoon Mayfair, there he goes again, not defending education. Why don't you go out there and talk to the teachers? Why don't you go out there and talk to the school boards? I have visited many of them and they have enumerated all of the programs that had to be cut because of your unilateral decision. I say to the member of Mayfair, you keep that up and this will be your first and your last session in this legislature. The people will take care of that.

It's time, I think, that you get out to the ordinary people again, listen to them, and listen to the hurts that you people have inflicted upon these people.

I say to the members opposite, you can't say one thing before the budget and promise the people that you will take care of their problems in education and in health, as you did — and in neither one did you take care of it — and then give them a 2 per cent increase. I asked the minister, I asked him the other day in the House about the increases for teachers, and he seemed to indicate that that will be taken care of. The members that I spoke to today, from Yorkton and Sturgis and Saskatoon, certainly didn't seem to think that there was extra money available. Where is that money for the 3 per cent increase? Do they have to again add it on to the local taxation or is the government going to make some money available for them? If not, what you're saying is that the property tax has to be increased again.

Mr. Chairman, I want to spend just a few minutes on the area of university. We have seen what low priority the K to 12 have received from this government. We know that the taxation has shifted from the provincial government to taxpayers, local taxpayers. And this is opposite to what it was in the 1970s under our government. And many of the people are saying, boy if we could only go back to the kinds of sharing there was in education in the 1970s, everything would be all right, everything would be all right.

I'll tell you, in this last budget in education I think nobody was hit harder than our two universities. Our two universities, over the last number of years, have lost their grounds as far as inflation is concerned. In fact, they've lost about 10 per cent of the actual funding from what it was in 1982 on a per . . . from 1982 to 1987.

And, Mr. Chairman, I want to just draw to your attention something that maybe many of us aren't aware of. In 1982 the average tuition fee in Regina was \$816. Today, Mr. Speaker, it's \$1,248 — an increase of 53 per cent. The taxation has again been shifted from the provincial government to the students at the university. At the U of S (University of Saskatchewan), it has gone up to 45.5 per cent.

Let me, Mr. Chairman, just draw to the people's attention the kinds of revenues that were made available in the 1970s and '80s when we were the government, compared to this government opposite. From 1982 to 1983, real operating grants per student, from 1982-1983 to 1987-1988, last year, the real operating grants per student have declined — I want the members opposite to know — from \$9,016 to \$6,907, a decrease of 23 per cent. The financing to our universities in operating have gone down by 23 per cent under this government, not including this year. So even this year, you probably, if you add it on, it's gone down about 25 or 26 per cent. Is it any wonder, is it any wonder that our universities can't operate on the high quality standards that we have expected of them? Simply not possible.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — I don't know when the last time was that the Minister of Education has talked to either one of the presidents of the university.

**An Hon. Member:** — I talked to him today.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Well, I can tell you if you listened, what the two presidents will tell you. They simply cannot function any longer on the operating and capital grants that you people are providing. And more and more, more and more of the burden will be shifted to our students.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, not only did they cut the operating grants, but they also cut out most of the bursaries. No longer do our students get bursaries. A student today in a four-year course on an average will be 25 to \$30,000 in debt when they get through, thanks to the government opposite who cut out one of the best bursary programs that existed in Canada under this government, under this government.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, there are lots of other things that one could talk about in this Appropriation Bill for interim supply. My point simply was to point out to the people of Saskatchewan that when it comes to education this government simply has not allocated sufficient funds to guarantee us the quality of education that we have become accustomed to in this province. Under their rule, education has gradually gone down, and it's going to be our students and our future leaders who are going to be the ones that are suffering.

Budgets must adequately fund education, and this government promised that they would. It was a promise made and another promise that was broken. And Mr. Chairman, I want to say to the members opposite that we cannot tolerate this any longer. This province simply can't afford not to have top-notch universities, top-notch schools from K to 12. Yes, that takes money, but it is a worthwhile investment. This budget does not address those problems and it's . . . I'm sorry to say, Mr. Speaker, that reluctantly we will have to support the interim supply so that the government can carry on at least with its function of governing this province as badly as it may be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, we are being asked to approve an interim expenditure when the budget, as my colleague mentioned earlier, does not address the problems. This is a budget that's devoid of commitment, it's devoid of vision, and it's devoid of compassion.

The Minister of Finance and the Tory government are telling the public that they've increased the health care budget by 5.6 per cent, Mr. Chairman, and that's not true. That's simply not true. When you look very carefully at the budget and take into consideration capital expenditure, supplementary estimates, and payments to the property management corporation, it becomes very obvious that the health care budget has been increased only 3.5 per cent from last year.

And the Tory government over the years has fiddled around with their health care budget and have shifted many programs and expenditures out of other government departments to the Department of Health. Examples include: continuing care expenditures, which used to be funded through Social Services; the minister's salary, which used to be funded through Executive Council; and routine support services, which used to be funded through supply and services. And these transferred items, Mr. Chairman, now amount to more than \$240 million per year.

And you know why they've done that, Mr. Chairman? Do you know why they've done that? They've done that because they want to say to the public of Saskatchewan that they have been spending increasing amounts of money on health when we all know that it's simply not true.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — The 3.5 per cent increase in the Health budget over last year, Mr. Chairman, does nothing when one takes a look at the fact inflation in Saskatchewan is at the rate of 6 per cent. It doesn't even meet the inflationary requirements. How are we supposed to maintain our hospitals and continue to provide health services when we're actually experiencing a 2.5 per cent cut? Because when one considers the fact that inflation is at 6 per cent and the increase is only 3.5, it's in effect a 2.5 per cent cut.

And I listened to the budget speech, Mr. Chairman, something like 10,000 words in that budget speech. And I listened to every single word and not one of them mentioned the prescription drug plan nor the dental plan, which are two very serious issues in the province today. Not one.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — the dental plan was the best of its kind in North America, Mr. Chairman. It was accessible to school children and it provided a high quality of dental services. And this government destroyed the school-based dental plan and have not substituted the dental plan with any acceptable alternative. They were planning on a drop in the utilization of the plan in order to save money. And I



understand that utilization is at approximately one-third of the potential for utilization in the plan.

They fired some 400 dental workers to achieve their end of destroying this very valuable and highly successful dental plan. They fired 400 dental workers — most of whom are women, I will point out, most of whom are women. And these women and other dental workers were dedicated, competent workers. And as I indicated the other night, one of them went to her PC MLA in Shaunavon and said to him, what am I going to do? A farm wife, incidentally, who was fired as a result of the decimation of the dental plan, and what did the PC MLA tell this woman to do? He told her to go on welfare.

And, Mr. Chairman, that's their commitment to farm families. That's their commitment to families.

And the Premier has admitted his mistake with respect to the dental plan. He's admitted the fact that this was not the right thing to do and it was a wrong choice on the part of this government, and he talked about a new and exciting dental plan that was going to be implemented in rural Saskatchewan. And I listened for it, Mr. Chairman, in the budget speech, and I heard not one word about this new and exciting dental plan — not one word.

The prescription drug plan is another example, Mr. Chairman, of this government's wrong priorities. Low income families are simply unable to meet their daily living expenses and pay the 100 per cent up-front costs on prescription drugs, and they're suffering from these heartless PC policies.

They're making decisions between whether they put groceries on the table or buy their prescription drugs. And we hear about this every single day, Mr. Chairman. This is not an exaggeration, it's a fact. And if the members opposite were listening to their constituents — some of whom write to us, incidentally — if they were listening to their constituents they would realize this was a serious problem, and this budget should have addressed this problem. But what did it do, Mr. Chairman? A \$26 million slash in the prescription drug plan from 1986-87 — a \$26 million slash.

And what else does this government do? It supports Brian Mulroney and the federal PC government to endorse drug patent legislation that has already shown an unprecedented increase in drug prices across Canada. I understand the legislation hasn't even been finally approved and the multinational drug companies are already upping their drug prices. And this Tory government supported that, and the people of Saskatchewan are paying for it in 100 per cent up-front drug costs every day. Low income families are paying for it.

And then we take a look at the hospital waiting lists in the province, Mr. Chairman, which are now 15,000. I am told, and at the end of February in Saskatoon was 10,000. And we take a look at the fact that we've had summer bed closures in this province on a regular basis; the fact that people are waiting for urgent surgery and can't get beds; the fact that doctors make decisions every single day as to whose case is more life threatening, to determine who is

going to get priority for the surgery. And these problems are occurring on a daily basis in Saskatchewan.

And this budget, what does this budget do? It gives an increase in health care that doesn't even equal the rate of inflation. That's what it does — or doesn't do, I should say, Mr. Chairman. The waiting list is absolutely intolerable in this province, and there has to be immediate action taken by that government to make sure that this waiting list is brought down to a more tolerable level.

(2000)

And what about the problem with respect to specialists in this province? We have an extreme amount of difficulty getting specialists to come in this province. And what did this government do? It froze the training program in the health budget last year. It froze the funding for the training program, and this year we're talking about a 1.3 per cent increase only in that training program. How can we possibly hope to educate doctors into specialties and keep them in the province if we're not providing adequate funding for these training programs?

There's absolutely no question, Mr. Chairman, that they have betrayed the people of Saskatchewan because they promised . . . Their election promises were promises of good health care but instead they have chosen not to make health care a priority, to slash and cut on health care, and not to put the adequate funding in health care, and then to go about Saskatchewan trying to perpetrate this myth of spiralling health costs — which is a complete myth, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — And I've referred to some of my reasons for that when I talked about the shifting in programs and expenditures from one department into the health budget in order to pad the health budget.

So this government has constantly made wrong choices and wrong priorities, Mr. Chairman. They attempt to tell people that there is no money for health. Well let's just see whether or not there is no money for health.

Let's take a look at the 1.7 billion that has been given away to big out-of-province oil corporations in oil royalties. Let's talk about the 1 billion they can pull out of their hat when it comes to the Premier's riding and the Deputy Premier's riding — 1 billion on the Shand-Rafferty dam. Let's talk about the \$20 million a year they have to spend or \$27 million a year they have to spend on self-serving advertising, and the 8.4 million a year, \$34,000 a day, on empty office space. And what does a hospital bed cost per day? I believe it's \$400 a day, Mr. Chairman. They're wasting \$34,000 a day on empty office space. That's their priorities, Mr. Chairman, that's their priorities. And what about the 23 million to the Saskoil sell-off and the 22 million they gave to their friend, their PC friend, Peter Pocklington, in gifts?

Meanwhile, because of these misplaced priorities, who's paying the bill? Who's paying for their \$3.7 million deficit and their misplaced priorities? I'll tell you who's paying,

Mr. Chairman. It's the ordinary men and women in this province. It's the men and women in Regina Lakeview and all the other constituencies in Saskatchewan that are paying for their incompetence, their mismanagement, and their misplaced priorities. Individual income tax is up some 79 million, Mr. Chairman, up some 79 million. They've increased the flat tax to 2 per cent. They've increased the tobacco tax. They've re-levied a gas tax. Utility rate increases are up an average of 47 per cent from 1981 to 1987. And every dollar paid by individuals, Mr. Chairman, in individual income tax — for every dollar paid, corporations pay 16 cents.

And what do we see in this budget? We see that the corporations are getting a tax reduction in income tax, but individuals are having to pay more. Since the PC government has been in office, Mr. Chairman, total individual income tax revenue has increased by 103 per cent — 103 per cent, and that's in tough times, Mr. Chairman. During that same period, total corporate income tax revenue has increased by 10 per cent. So we know where their priorities are and it's not with the families of this province and with the men and the women of this province. And they can say all they want about being for the family but their actions speak louder than their words, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — The people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman, the men and women of Saskatchewan, are asking for this government to quit its destruction of medical care in Saskatchewan but the budget simply does not address that issue.

And they're asking us to approve their expenditures with this interim supply Bill. Well obviously the people of Saskatchewan need what money they can get; obviously they do. And it is with reluctance that I support this legislation but I must make the point, Mr. Chairman, that this budget is a heartless budget, and it's the product of an arrogant and uncaring government. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to take just a few moments to take the time of the committee, to express a few words with respect to this debate on interim supply, not so much because of the specifics of this Bill — because it does provide just that, interim supply — but because it is part and parcel of a larger, overall budget scheme which the government announced a few days ago in a budget proposal which, Mr. Chairman, in my travels around the province of Saskatchewan, I want to assure the members of this House, has been rejected and rejected soundly by the people of this province.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter whether one travels to Carnduff, Saskatchewan or Estevan or Weyburn, Saskatchewan or Saskatoon Eastview or Regina Elphinstone. The message that the people of Saskatchewan are telling us is that this government's budget is based on essentially no hope, no sense of

direction, no sense of relief for the great problems which are facing individual, ordinary families and individuals in this province, be they on the farms or in the cities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . Mr. Chairman, in effect this budget is based on the Tory philosophy, the Progressive Conservative philosophy of competition. It can be summarized in one word — competition.

**An Hon. Member:** — Rugged individualism.

**Mr. Romanow:** — The belief . . . The rugged individualism, as somebody opposite said. Thank you very much. Rugged individualism and competition.

For six years they have practised this approach to the public affairs of the province of Saskatchewan, and the results are evident for all of us to see. The results today, Mr. Chairman, are devastating. That's not an overstatement.

Today, in the city of Saskatoon alone, the unemployment rate is in excess of 12 per cent. It's way above the national average. In fact, the unemployment rate in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman, is way above — well, perhaps, not way above — but above the national average.

In the city of Saskatoon, the rate of inflation, Mr. Chairman, today is at 6 per cent. It may be not quite as high in rural Saskatchewan, but I'm pretty sure that it's at about the same level, if not in fact higher, when you consider the costs of production with respect to agriculture and the costs of living in rural Saskatchewan. An inflation rate which is steadily creeping up at 6 per cent, 12 per cent unemployment, and people feel this.

Mr. Chairman, on top of this unemployment, on top of the fact that there is no hope, on top of the fact that there is a greater squeeze on the family dollar, we are seeing this government contributing to the difficulties and to the crisis of family farms, and farmers in Eastview and in Elphinstone, in Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw — it doesn't matter where they may be — to make ends meet.

Utility rates, power corporation rates have gone up steadily and, I might add, dramatically, Mr. Chairman. Telephone rates have gone up steadily and, I might add, dramatically, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday in question period, the minister in charge of SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) acknowledged the fact that the moment that the by-elections are over in Eastview and in Elphinstone, SGI will have an increase again in the registration fees for car insurance.

The Deputy Premier scoffs at the suggestion. I hope that I'm proven wrong, and we'll see whether or not I am or not. Everybody knows that in January a cabinet document, which is before the document of the . . . consideration of the cabinet, indicated a \$25 per car surcharge. The government neither has accepted or rejected that position, but it has told everybody that it is under consideration and that they'll be some increase that \$25 is, in the words of the minister from SGI, "too high."

I want to tell you, Mr. Chairman, whether it's \$25 per car or \$10 per car, given the fact that we've had in SGI, as we've had in SaskPower and SaskTel, and all of the utilities, increase after increase — any kind of an increase, Mr. Chairman, in this regard is undesirable and is going the wrong way with respect to the families of the province of Saskatchewan and Saskatoon.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — So we have high unemployment, we have the question of high inflation, we have the question of high utility prices, we have the question of the taxation levels of this province increasing. This has been well documented by the members on this side of the caucus . . . on the House, of the legislature, this group of the caucus, Mr. Chairman, members on this side of the House.

The taxation rate in this budget has gone up from 1.5 per cent to 2 per cent flat tax. I invite you, sir, if you haven't completed your income tax yet, I invite anybody who might be watching this particular debate in the House this evening. If you haven't calculated your income tax, calculate the flat tax rate. Calculate the income tax and ask yourself whether or not you're paying less tax or more tax to the Government of Saskatchewan. And of course the obvious fact is that this government is picking the pockets of the small person. Not the small person, every taxpayer — middle income, upper middle income, low income — picking and picking away at the tax rates and at the pocket-books of the people of the province of Saskatchewan on top of all of this.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — And for all of this, Mr. Chairman, we have to show a province which is nearly on the verge of bankruptcy. For all of this, for all of this increased taxation, for all of this increased utility rates, we have to show, Mr. Chairman, a province which is, as I said, nearly on its knees with a total cumulative debt, according to the Minister of Finance in his own words, of \$3.7 billion, Mr. Chairman. Or translated another way, \$3,700 for every man, woman, and child in Saskatchewan, for everybody who might be watching tonight — \$3,700 obligation of debt on the principal alone, a new debt, a new debt since 1982 on the consolidated budget, Mr. Chairman.

To service that debt is approximately in the order of 325 million to 350 million a year. Or translating it in general terms, that's a million dollars to the people of Saskatchewan, to the people of Saskatoon and Regina, and to the people of rural Saskatchewan — a million dollars a day in interest charges alone, Mr. Chairman, in interest charges alone.

If ever we should bring the province's budget into equilibrium — that is to say the amount of money that the province takes in by way of taxation should equal the amount of money that goes out by taxation and expenditures, Mr. Chairman — we'll have to find an extra \$350 million just to meet the interest payments alone, and that's not even to touch one penny of the \$3.7 billion principal debt that we're all carrying on our backs.

This, Mr. Chairman, is a horrendous situation. It's a

horrendous situation, not only for us, those of us who are taxpayers and those of us outside this Chamber, but this is a terrific charge on the future generations. I won't say "terrific." I will amend that to say, an horrific charge on the kids, on the children of tomorrow.

A debt of \$3,700 per man, woman, and child will be partly paid off by us, but it'll be mainly paid off by the children of today's families. It will be the obligation of those young men and women, as they enter school and graduate from school and then search for jobs in the province of Saskatchewan, to find a job, to keep their families, their new families, intact, to develop their families, and yet to pay off a debt incurred by this administration in five to six short — years of PC administration; a debt which is, Mr. Chairman, in no simple terms to be described other than horrific, horrific, and that is the state of affairs in the province of Saskatchewan today.

We see a farm community, Mr. Chairman — you're a farmer yourself; you know what I talk of — a farm community where the total debt is in the amount, according to the estimates of the wheat pool and responsible farm organizations, of \$6 billion. Two-thirds of that farm debt, Mr. Chairman, is farm debt owed to government institutions: one-third, roughly, to provincial institutions like ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan); one-third, roughly, to federal institutions, like FCC (Farm Credit Corporation); and one-third to private lending institutions — a \$6 billion debt, two-thirds of which, in one way or other, is encumbered by the family farmers to the provincial and the federal governments. Today there's a debt crisis of monumental proportions.

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I'd say that the crisis today is equivalent to — perhaps even in some ways worse than — the farm crisis of the Dirty Thirties. The farm crisis of the Dirty Thirties was a crisis not only of economics but it was a crisis also of nature and climate. And today, sadly and scarily, we see almost a repetition of this situation. I don't blame the government for the drought; I don't blame the government for the total complete problem in the debt situation with respect to agriculture; I even don't blame the government for the fact that the world situation has affected the markets and the supplies and the costs and the prices for resources and has affected the revenues of the treasurer. It's not an easy job being a treasurer in the province of Saskatchewan or anywhere in Saskatchewan or perhaps in Canada in the world today, the free world today.

But I do blame this government, Mr. Chairman, for not having a game plan in place. I do blame the Minister of Finance, and I do blame the Premier and the Progressive Conservatives for having a game plan which seems to be predicated essentially on budgeting by polling information, by what public opinion says, and budgeting on what I think is a philosophy of unbridled competition — a philosophy of competition which sets divisions of our society against other divisions; which sets working person against farming person; which sets young against

old; which gives all of the people of the province of Saskatchewan little hope. And that's why we've characterized this budget as a budget with no hope, no help, and no heart, Mr. Chairman — no heart.

It's as if the government has almost given up in its responsibilities of governance. Again, sometimes I don't really envy the fact that the treasury benches have to cope with this problem, but the reality is that they're charged with the responsibility. And if you look over at the government benches, I don't say this only on subjective grounds, although one can only observe what they do and how they react, their response seems to be exclusively motivated on day-to-day ad hocery.

This is a government which has not articulated a large game plan, other than of course something called free trade with the United States. We can debate that and are going to debate it in other estimates, perhaps something in a broad general term about the international crisis for agriculture, but nothing here of a concrete, tangible way for the working person in Elphinstone, the business person in Saskatoon Eastview, for the farmer in Sturgis, or for the farmer in Carnduff, Saskatchewan. There is no solid game plan except debt, debt, more debt, hopelessness, helplessness, heartlessness, more taxes on that farmer, more taxes on that working person, more taxes on that business person who's trying to make a bottom line work. There is no game plan, Mr. Chairman.

And indeed if the Minister of Finance had come to this legislature and explained to us in a sensible way that what was being done was cast within a broader, philosophical approach, that there was some light at the end of the tunnel, than I suspect, while we might not agree, that there would at least be something by which we could meet in our debate, and we could discuss and debate with some specifics and with some concrete matters before us. But that's not been the case at all.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance and this government has, as I've said, no game plan. And it's a game plan which is, in effect, if there is one, one of simply sitting back and letting events unfold as they should unfold. I don't understand, Mr. Chairman. I know that members will say this is a political speech and I guess it is a political speech, but I put it as honestly as I can. I don't understand a government or any government, Mr. Chairman, that can justify an 11,000-person hospital bed waiting list in the city of Saskatoon alone.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — There are reasons. There may be reasons; there may be excuses; there may be explanations. Those are cold comfort, Mr. Chairman, cold comfort to those people who are dying or sick or need help. I don't understand how any government can stand and defend that.

I don't understand, Mr. Chairman, how any government can defend the situation which I'm hearing everywhere in the province of Saskatchewan with respect to the prescription drug plan, especially on the basis that the Premier does. I don't understand. You know yourself, sir, that you've received numerous phone calls and letters on

this problem. I know you have, because I've received copies of correspondence directed to government members where you have people who have to make the choice between drugs, prescription drugs authorized by a doctor, and their day-to-day necessities of shelter and food.

Some say that that's overstating it starkly. It isn't overstating it. Last night I was in Weyburn at a public meeting, and I had two people come to me, both of whom said that they'd never held a party membership for the New Democratic Party — they said they'd never held a party membership for any party for that matter — both of whom on separate occasions related to me the incident with respect to drugs and prescription drugs in their family.

What defence am I to give to them? They may not even know that I'm a member of the opposition. They think that we're all trying to do the best that we can for the province of Saskatchewan. What defence am I to give to them? What defence is the Minister of Finance to give to them, to these people who are struggling on this issue? I have the names of these people. I'm going to be communicating with them, obviously, and explaining the circumstances as best as I can.

How do you explain to the Minister of Education, the Minister of Education who absolutely has given up as well on the young people of Saskatchewan? The Deputy Premier laughs, but the reality is that what our young people are asked to accept is some vision of the 21st century of education. Our young people are asked to accept some vision of tomorrow, a vision which of course nobody has ever articulated from the government benches, a vision which only seems to exist in the fevered mind and the feverish mind of the Minister of Education. He's never put it down on paper. It's a concept which he simply throws out willy-nilly.

How do you tell? How do any one of us tell a young man or a young woman about to graduate from university, or trying to get into university, what the next step is with respect to education and with respect to the post-secondary education? What can you tell them? I tell you, Mr. Chairman, you simply are not able to. We're not able to describe the circumstances to them.

What do we say? That there's some hope down the line. Where is the hope down the line? There is no game plan articulated by the Minister of Finance. And I don't dump on the Minister of Finance as a person himself because I repeat again, I think that this is not an easy job being Minister of Finance as a person himself because, I repeat again, I think that this is not an easy job being Minister of Finance. But in the government that he is a part of, a government with no game plan, no hope, no heart, there is little help or no help for the people of the province of Saskatchewan and for the people of Saskatoon and for Regina and for rural Saskatchewan.

And I tell you, Mr. Chairman, that under those circumstances we have to take the occasions that we can in this legislature, such as interim supply, to communicate to the Minister of Finance and to the Premier and to the Deputy Premier, that they have to stick around and attend to these problems here. And they have to give us a specific game plan, and they have to get off

this message of competition. They have to get off this idea of unbridled competition. They have to get off this political notion of divide and conquer. They have to defend the working people of Saskatchewan, not attack them. They have to defend the working people as they would the farming people. That it is no longer applicable in the crisis that we are living in, Mr. Chairman, this theory of competition. That the only theory, the only ethic which applies in this crisis that we're living in now, Mr. Chairman, is the ethic of co-operation, not competition.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — That we're in this boat together — all of us. That it's going to take the best of our people, it's going to take the best of our brains, it's going to take the best of our young men and women — all of the goodwill of our farming people, all of the goodwill of our city people. It's going to take the principle of co-operation to make it work, Mr. Chairman, and not the principle of competition.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — If the economic pie is diminishing, as we are told by the Minister of Finance, there's got to be a sitting down around the table to discuss this with the people of Saskatchewan, and the farming people, and the working people, and the business people, to describe the difficulty and the shares that are obligated and that they can take out of that pie. We've got to practise the ethic of co-operation.

If we're expecting that people in Saskatchewan and Canada are to help the unemployed worker, we've got to explain that through the principle of co-operation to our farmer, who's also equally hurting.

If we are going to continue on our programs of assistance to farming people, we've got to explain that to the city people, to make sure that that ethic of co-operation is understood and accepted by them. We need now, more than ever, Mr. Chairman, the principle of co-operation. We need now, more than ever, a government with competence, a government with vision, a government that seeks to build and unite — not a government that seeks to divide — a government that has some hope for the people of Saskatchewan. We need that now more than ever, and we don't have it, unfortunately, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — And I know, Mr. Chairman, that in this kind of an atmosphere, in this kind of a forum, in a partisan political forum that we exist in, that somehow the members opposite will view this in exclusively partisan terms. I suppose I'll have the same tendency when I listen to them.

But I tell you, Mr. Chairman, as I'm ready to take my place on this particular interim Bill, we need now not an old, outdated philosophy of competition — ruling by polls, seeking to rule on the basis of dividing farmer versus labourer, young versus old — we need now, Mr.

Chairman, as I take my place, a budget and a government and a leadership which is leading us to a new and higher principle of co-operation.

We need now a government and a leadership and MLAs that are devoted to that principle of co-operation more than ever. And I say that maybe we can't do much in this Legislative Assembly. Maybe we can't get the government defeated or amend the budget because of the numbers situation, but we're not helpless in this situation. The people of Regina and Saskatoon and even Saskatchewan, rural Saskatchewan, are not helpless. They'll have a chance fairly soon in two by-elections, and hopefully in a general election, to see whether or not they ascribe to this ideal and principle of co-operation to which we commend the government opposite to consider. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I was pleasantly surprised to hear the Leader of the Opposition join the debate tonight because I appreciate the fact that he has taken a stand on a few issues.

I was a little surprised with respect to the Leader of the Opposition tonight to say that there wasn't a strategy, even though the budget document set out the strategy. And we make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan has to participate in a world economy. And I get frightened for Saskatchewan people when I hear the Leader of the Opposition say, you can't have a competitive world, you can't be competitive, that we don't want Saskatchewan people to compete with others.

Mr. Speaker, if you can't compete, you will not survive in the world. And the NDP tonight, and we've had it articulated so well, the NDP philosophy of "back to the '60s," which is: we will draw a big wall around Saskatchewan; we won't compete because we're afraid to compete; that Saskatchewan people can't compete; that competition is evil, that it's wrong, that it's immoral. And that's what we heard, the restatement of the 1960s philosophy from the leader of the New Democratic Party. And I was saddened — I was saddened, Mr. Speaker, because, notwithstanding what the Leader of the Opposition says, the world has changed, Mr. Chairman; the world has changed. And Saskatchewan people want, Mr. Speaker, to be able to compete on the world stage and they will not buy that philosophy that there's no competition.

And we take a look, Mr. Speaker, at other comments made by the hon. member when he talks about no . . . Well I said competition, but then he said there's no strategy. And it was very, very interesting, Mr. Speaker, that one of the areas that has come through loud and clear, and I think it applies, with all respect, not only to the Leader of the Opposition but to the finance critic, and it came through loud and clear on budget day. And I sat in this Chamber and all parties had guests. There were a group of people that traditionally come to the budget speech and they're the investment community from around the world. And we had people here from Japan, we had people here from Europe, people from Canada, people from the United States.

(2030)

And they were absolutely shocked — absolutely shocked, Mr. Chairman — when the Leader of the Opposition stood before this House and indicated that he had absolutely no comprehension or grasp of the investment corporation of Saskatchewan; when he said that the investment corporation was going to take over the operation of the auto fund and the Workers' Compensation Board; that he couldn't understand the financing between, Mr. Speaker, who are managing and investing in pension funds, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to who are operating the various proposals, Mr. Speaker.

And I've heard now on three different occasions from investment people around the world that, what has happened to the New Democratic Party, when they at least, in the past, understood finances and understood budgeting and understood financial management? And what has happened to that party today, that they don't understand the financing and they don't understand the need, Mr. Speaker, for this province to participate in the world economy?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I found it a little surprising, Mr. Speaker, to listen to the hon. member when he talks about the unemployment rate in Saskatchewan, and four or five days ago stood up in this Assembly and said, you're bailing out SED Systems. Don't help SED Systems, and don't help Develcon in Saskatoon. And the NDP said, don't help SED Systems and don't help Develcon.

And on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, they complain about the unemployment rate, Mr. Speaker, a rather great surprise to people watching.

And, Mr. Speaker, we heard some rather strange comments from the Leader of the Opposition and several of his supporters, and they talked about, Mr. Speaker, the family. That party over there is being criticized from one end of this province to the other for probably the greatest attack on traditional family values that the people of this province and their families have ever seen, are coming from the New Democratic Party. And that's why today there are old CCF members, and others, that are tearing up their memberships, like the president of the New Democratic Party in Melville, who says, I can't support the NDP any more and their moral stands or lack of them.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — And can't support, can't support, Mr. Speaker, what we're seeing out there as, and I use the phrase lightly, a war — a war and an attack on traditional Saskatchewan values, the likes of which we have never seen in the province, Mr. Chairman.

And they stand up tonight and they criticize this government because, when the New Democrats were in office, they wanted to give the seniors a measly \$25 a month — \$25 a month supplements, the NDP. And the hon. members sit over there and said that was fine. And this budget says that it will be \$80 a month in November,

and they voted against it, Mr. Chairman. They said that they were opposed to the increase in the senior supplement of \$15 a month starting November 1, 1988. And the New Democratic Party said no, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, dramatic increases for student loans. The NDP said no to more money for student loans, and they said it by opposing this budget. And they said no to the students again, Mr. Speaker, when they stood up here one member after another member and said, it's all right, so that students can't write their exams, that that's fair and that's proper. And the NDP said they support efforts so that students couldn't write their exams, perhaps would be lost to the job market, and perhaps lose job opportunities. And the NDP said, we don't care about the students; all we want to do is support the trade union efforts to stop the students.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP did absolutely nothing in 11 long years for the family tragedy of alcoholism and drug abuse. They stood up in this House, one NDP member after another, and said, no more money for Whitespruce, for the youth treatment centre for young people suffering from substance abuse and the tragedy that that is causing families around this province. And again, the NDP said, no more money for drug and substance abuse treatment in this province. And that's what they stood here and said.

Mr. Speaker, the only province in the country that has a special tax credit for single families and the difficulties that they face, and the NDP members, one after the other, said no, we don't want a tax credit for single families in this province, and each and every one of the NDP voted no, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP had an opportunity to say to the seniors, we support the seniors' tax credit, the only one in Canada. And every single New Democratic member stood up and said no, we're not voting for the tax decrease and tax credit for seniors. They're saying again no to the seniors, Mr. Speaker, and every single one of them stood up and said no to the seniors.

Mr. Speaker, they've talked about welfare reform, and we've heard from the member from Moose Jaw his views about welfare reform. And, Mr. Speaker, this budget made it clear that one of the prime efforts of this government is trying to break the welfare cycle. And when we stand up in the budget after welfare reform and say that every single employable in the city of Prince Albert that formerly was on welfare is now working, the NDP said no, we're against welfare reform, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — They said no, we're opposed to people on welfare getting a first chance or a second chance to get a meaningful job. The NDP said no.

Mr. Speaker, it's very, very interesting that when educational leaders and health leaders and hospital administrators are saying it's a fair budget, it's fair in the circumstances, the NDP still stand up and say, no, we're opposed to the government giving more money to health and education, and voted against the budget, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they mentioned small business when they call small business the corporate friends of the Conservative party. Mr. Speaker, I wear that badge with some pride. And they said when this government is making an effort to deal with the business tax, the NDP had an opportunity to deliver a message to small business and say, it's a good idea to reduce the business tax by 50 per cent. And what did the NDP say? No, Mr. Speaker, they said no to small business. They said no to the hospitals, no to education, no to small business, no to seniors, no to people on welfare wanting assistance and help and the opportunity. And that's what we've seen, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, is the same old rhetoric from the same old people in the same old way, and over and over and over again.

And one of the great tragedies, Mr. Speaker, of what we've seen in this session, what we've seen in this session . . . And here was an opportunity with a new leader, here was an opportunity with a new leader to stand up and say, I've got some new ideas; I think that there is an alternative, I think there are some different proposals that we could bring to the people of this province. And if it's one thing that's coming through loud and clear, Mr. Speaker, is that New Democratic Party members from one end of this province are already saying, we need Allan Blakeney and we miss Allan Blakeney. And that came through loud and clear over the budget efforts of members opposite.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Never have we seen, never have we seen a less intelligent response to a budget from the opposition anywhere in the Dominion of Canada than what we have seen now, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Mr. Speaker, we've got some ideas of what they'd change. They've got a couple of ideas. They've taken different positions, and I won't talk about the issues of who should be allowed to adopt, as the member from Moose Jaw so ably articulated the NDP position. And I won't talk about some of their other issues that are so disconcerting New Democrats from one end of the province to the other. And I am sorry that the Leader of the Opposition . . . I'm sorry that the Leader of the Opposition isn't prepared to listen. And I know why he doesn't want to hear the message, Mr. Speaker. He doesn't want to hear it because he knows he's wrong; he knows his party is wrong. And Mr. Speaker, above all I think he knows he made the wrong decision last fall.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — We've seen the tragedy, Mr. Chairman, of a New Democratic Party, of a New Democratic Party that so regrettably doesn't understand agriculture, doesn't understand farming, doesn't understand the problems, and most of all, Mr. Speaker, doesn't have any solutions for farmers.

It's all right, Mr. Speaker, to take the traditional NFU (National Farmers Union) approach on agriculture which

is write off all the loans, give the money, write off the land bank, give us our land bank, and the government put in the money to run the farms, Mr. Speaker. That is not the acceptable position of farmer after farmer and the vast majority of farmers in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, not one new idea, not one new proposal, not one new suggestion from the New Democratic Party for the farmers of this province.

And I think it's another tragedy, Mr. Speaker, that a new leader, a new leader, Mr. Speaker, you would have thought would have said, farmers, farmers, I'm prepared to listen and I've got some new ideas. But what did we hear? Absolutely nothing. Absolutely nothing. And, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what he's giving the farmers — absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the NDP tried the other day, rather mistakenly, to indicate that they now are having a conversion on the road to Damascus that they now favour day care. And they voted against, Mr. Speaker, doubling the amount of money for day care and the number of spaces in this budget. And what did the NDP try and do, Mr. Speaker? Oh, the government's not doing enough they said. All of a sudden we're in favour of day care. Mr. Speaker, they voted against, they voted against, Mr. Speaker, doubling the number of day-care spaces in this province when they had the opportunity to say, we've had a conversion. We do believe in day care. They just turned around and said, no, Mr. Speaker — no more money for day care, and we oppose the provincial government for nearly doubling the spaces, day-care spaces.

(2045)

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of others I forgot, and I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition. It's a rather auspicious session and his confrere from Saskatoon, and being the first unionized law firm in the province of Saskatchewan, and . . .

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — And, Mr. Speaker, I, on behalf of many other lawyers are asking the question around the province: is that now party policy, or is that a unique situation?

I suppose, when I look at the anemic effort of the opposition, and I look at their anemic support on so many issues, and I look at their anemic support for farmers, and I look at their anemic support for families, and I look at their anemic support for those on welfare, you know what the surprising thing is for me, is why the steelworkers were the ones to unionize the new member's law firm.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Why the steelworkers? Mr. Speaker, I think that there's something a little humorous, and I think all members will join with me in recognizing, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a rather serious distortion, distortion, Mr. Speaker, in the fact that the new union is

generally perceived to be strong — you know, strong views, strong position, strong industry, strong people. And what we saw was anemic efforts.

No, Mr. Speaker, what we've also seen through this session, and I want to take . . . I want to take us a look. And I think the press — and I know they're watching on television — are sitting here, and the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. We all remember, we all remember, how when Bill 2 came down, the New Democratic Party and its leader and its justice critic said, the Government of Saskatchewan under Grant Devine didn't go far enough on French language rights.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order. Order. Order. Order, please, order. I know that in the enthusiasm of the debate we tend to forget that the names of members are not to be used, but rather position, please.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I'm sorry. I thought I referred to the Leader of the Opposition. And the justice critic for the opposition said that they were going to want this government to go further, further and fight for, and they were going to fight, fight, fight for more French language rights and issues. And what happened, Mr. Speaker? They asked one question on the first day. They got not only their fingers burnt, Mr. Speaker, and they haven't said one thing further, and they have backed out and backed away, Mr. Speaker, from another issue and another flip-flop and another position.

Oh no, Mr. Speaker, even today when we met the students from Gravelbourg, the justice critic, articulating the New Democratic Party position said, oh, I'm not sure what we're going to do now. I'm not sure. I don't like what the government's doing and the Premier's doing, but I'm not sure now what I'm going to do on this issue. Oh no, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, where's the leadership? All we've seen is jelly. Jelly, and there's no position, Mr. Speaker, that they're not prepared to sacrifice in the interest of politics, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — No, Mr. Speaker, No, Mr. Speaker, we've seen them do flip-flops. The member from Moose Jaw is not sure now whether his position on homosexual adoption is one that he necessarily supports as strongly as he did beforehand, Mr. Speaker. But the people of this province, from one end to the other, are now starting to ask the question: why do the NDP attack my traditional values, and why do the NDP under their new leader, Mr. Speaker, decide that what Saskatchewan has traditionally stood for and what Saskatchewan has traditionally fought so strongly for, why is that being thrown out? And why has that new leader and that party all of a sudden, instead of defending the family, declared a royal war on the families of Saskatchewan? And that's what we've seen from the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

I am a little reluctant to give some advice to the opposition. I am a little reluctant to give some advice to the New Democratic Party, but let me tell you,

Saskatchewan . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, order. Order, please. I realize that the minister has created some excitement, but I would suggest that we contain our enthusiasm somewhat, and all of you will have the opportunity to contribute. So please, let's have a little bit more order.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — There's nothing more heart-rending, Mr. Speaker, than being goaded into an argument in the House that . . . But, Mr. Speaker, the issues that were raised by our hon. members are such that the people of this province are beginning to question. And some very prominent members of the New Democratic Party, from one end of the province, are beginning to question. And they're beginning to ask, and they're beginning to phone the members, and the members know full well the phone calls they're getting on their positions.

And I'm going to bet, Mr. Speaker — And I'll bet with the press and I'll bet with anybody in the New Democratic Party that the New Democratic Party, when Bill No. 2 was introduced, said it was not good enough and that they were going to oppose it. I'm going to predict, Mr. Speaker, with the political heat that the NDP are getting from one end of the province to the other, that they are going to do another new flip-flop and they're going to support the government on Bill 2. And I'll bet . . . And I'm going to challenge the press, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to challenge to remember what they said at the beginning of the debate, and what they're not saying as the debate goes on, and what they say at the end of the debate, Mr. Speaker. Because no political party, I don't think, has ever had such a strong reaction to their position as the New Democratic Party are getting.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province are asking New Democrats from one end of the province to the other, and they're asking Liberals from one end of the province to the other, to support our Premier on this issue, to support the government on this issue. That's what they're asking for. And woe betide members opposite that don't support this province, this Premier, and this government.

Mr. Speaker, I've indicated what the NDP have said no to — no to families; no to single families; no to seniors; no to farmers; no to small business; no to our traditional values. The only thing they're going to say yes to, and mark my words, is they're going to vote for this Bill tonight, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Chairman I wasn't going to get into this debate because I think the members on this side of the House have displayed, have displayed the kind of high level and concerned and intelligent debate that it wasn't necessary for me to speak. But after listening to this pitiful example, pitiful example of a Minister of Finance trying to defend a totally indefensible budget, I think I am compelled to say a few words in rebuttal.

We saw here today, Mr. Chairman, the most feeble defence of a budget ever given in this House in my memory. And I say that with some concern, because as the Leader of the Opposition so ably displayed in the



speech that he made on this Appropriation Bill, there is a need in this province, above anything and everything else, the getting together of the people and the legislators to do what is right, not pit people against each other. But what did the Minister of Finance do? Instead of defending his budget, he has done . . . he has followed the leadership of the member from Melville, whose leadership the Premier has followed, and has attacked minorities once again. When will this stop? When will this attack on the helpless and the disadvantaged that this government has perpetrated — the dividing, and the splitting, and the driving of the wedge stop? For what purpose is this? Is it that power to them that is so important that they will do anything, including the destroying of this province as they have so seriously started to do.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I say to the people of this province who may be watching this today: don't forget the spectacle you saw when you listened to the Minister of Finance make his defence. It was a sad day. A sad day when a Minister of Finance spends most of his remarks defending the investment companies as he did in his speech, and does not address the hurt and the suffering that exists among the people of Saskatchewan because of the misguided policies of this government.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I say also to the press, Mr. Chairman: notice that this government has refused to table the *Public Accounts*. If they are so proud about the expenditures that they have made of the taxpayers' money, what are they hiding? Isn't it news to tell the people of Saskatchewan when we have an unprecedented delay in the tabling of the *Public Accounts*. In most places of a democratic country, Mr. Chairman, that would be scandalous, that would be scandalous. Why is that not a headline? Why is that not an attack on this government which refuses to disclose to the people expenditures of this money, their money that they made over two years ago.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it is reported in the *Public Accounts* (meeting) today that the Minister of Finance, who spoke just now, had the *Public Accounts* printed on April 4th of this year and has had them on his desk for many days and is sitting on them and is not tabling them in this House.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — You didn't know that, Mr. Chairman, as a member of the caucus and not sitting on the front benches, but I'm telling you and those other back-benchers that's what your Minister of Finance has done . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — That's morality.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — That's irresponsible. That's an abuse of this Legislative Assembly. That's an abuse of power that any government has when it can collect hundreds of millions of dollars from taxpayers who can hardly afford to meet their mortgage payments, some of whom have to sacrifice the kind of groceries they buy. That's the way

this government is taxing the people of this province, and yet will not tell them where it is spending their money by refusing to table the *Public Accounts*.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Chairman, I heard the Minister of Finance talk about small business. Well, I want to tell him, through you, that the way small business prospers is when there is money circulating in the economy. Well here is what this government has done for small business. When they cancelled the property improvement grant, which was a massive property tax increases on everybody in Saskatchewan. They took \$80 million out of the economy which was spent in the small businesses of Saskatchewan. That's what they've done for small business.

They have shifted the tax load from the provincial government to the property taxes so that now there are \$400 million more spent on property taxes than there were six years ago. That's money that was spent in the small-business men and women shops where they employed people and created work. Is it any wonder that today in Saskatchewan there is an unemployment rate of 15.2 per cent among young people. That's shameful.

And what does the government do? It cuts back the employment job creation program for our students by \$6 million. That's their response to unemployment. The minister didn't want to talk about that. Oh, but he did talk about SED Systems, this great, marvellous answer to everything, selling it off to Fleet Aerospace of Toronto. But he didn't see the result of that. What was the result, Mr. Chairman? We have now got 70 people who have lost their jobs in SED Systems because of the policy and the sell-out by this government.

And whereas that high-tech industry was managed in Saskatchewan, do you know where it's managed from now? The member from Saskatoon knows. It's managed in Toronto. The management has moved out. And this happened time and time again where their misguided, ideological, blinkered, blind approach to privatization . . .

(2100)

Saskoil, they did the same thing. Before Saskoil was so-called privatized, it made a profit of \$22 million. That was dividend for the treasury and for the people of Saskatchewan. This year Saskoil made a profit of \$44 million, and do you know where it went? It went to those 75 per cent shareholders who don't live in this province. That's what is happening with their ideological, blinkered approach.

I say, Mr. Chairman, we don't need a government that drives wedges between people. We don't need a government that has ministers stand up in this House and attack the churches of this province. And why? Because they approach that in the same way as everything else. If somebody as much as questions the policies of this government, if somebody as much as speaks on behalf of the poor, which the churches have done — and so they should — you know that's part of their responsibility, Mr.

Chairman, as well as I know; they are doing what the churches of anywhere in the world of any denomination have always done in time immemorial: speak on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged — and instead of listening to them, this Conservative government attacks, attacks those churches for saying that, because they dared, because they dared speak on behalf of people that these heartless people have forgotten and choose to neglect.

And the question then is, Mr. Speaker, and I say to our viewers, who's next? Who is next? No one knows, but it's limitless. They have attacked so many minorities that now they're beginning to attack the majorities as well.

That's no way for government to operate, Mr. Chairman. That is heartless and cruel, and it is no wonder that many of the people of our society are saying, about governments like them, that there is really no more hope.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — There is a better way, there is a better way, and I was proud as I sat here to listen to our leader, the Leader of the Opposition, talk about that better way. And if anything else, Mr. Chairman . . .

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — And if anything else, Mr. Chairman, that came out today that I know that the viewers who are watching this debate saw, they saw a contrast. They saw the attacking and the dividing of the Conservative government, and they saw the understanding and the feeling debate by members of this side of the House, including the Leader of the Opposition.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — And in Saskatoon Eastview and in Regina Elphinstone when the canvassers go to visit them, that's what they're talking about.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — These are the antics of a desperate government. It's a desperate government that feels itself cornered, and feels, instead of trying to work out compromises and understanding, it has got to attack. This has got to stop.

In closing I want to say I am sure anyone who will have listened to this debate will notice very clearly that the minister did not talk about certain things. He didn't talk about the budget, hardly. He didn't talk about the prescription drug plan, which is causing people to have prescription costs that are backed up over 6, 7, \$800. Some of those people don't make that much money in one month. I wonder why the Minister of Finance didn't address that question? But he's defended the investment companies of the international world from New York.

Did the Minister of Finance stand and make a comment about the children's dental plan which they destroyed? Did he even address the promise made by the Premier when he said, oh, we made a mistake; we're going to change it; we're going to have a new policy to provide

dental service in rural Saskatchewan. Was it in the budget? No, it was not in the budget. Did the Minister of Finance address that question and explain it? No, he defended the investment firms and the banks.

Now that tells you something about the priorities of this government. It is not the people whose income taxes have increased unbelievably, it is that the priorities are the corporate sector, the banks to whom they have reduced the income tax rate from 17 to 15 per cent. The Minister of Finance didn't talk about that.

Why didn't the Minister of Finance, if this was a caring government that had things in charge and in control, address the question of the 11,000 people, sick people waiting to get into a hospital bed in the city of Saskatoon, because, Mr. Chairman, again the priorities are wrong. Eleven thousand people waiting and hurting and being afraid and worrying, but they are spending \$34,000 a day, I say to member from Yorkton, \$34,000 a day on empty office space all over Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Now those, those are priorities, Mr. Chairman, the priorities of that government, but not the priorities of this opposition.

And I close finally by saying this: this budget and this debate today is about fairness. And there is nothing fair about the kind of spending this government is doing and the kind of taxation that it's imposing on people of Saskatchewan. This budget is about competency, and when any government inherits . . . any political party becoming government inherits a surplus of \$140 million and in six years drags that down into a deficit of \$3.7 billion, that's incompetent.

This debate and this budget is about a closed and secretive government, a government that won't even table the *Public Accounts* because it knows that those public accounts report on the expenditures of this government in a pre-election year, and it knows that they are afraid that when the people of this province set those expenditures, they will say to this government once again, you're never going to get re-elected.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — And in Eastview and in Elphinstone they would barely show up as a distant third once those public accounts are available.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, this debate has been about honesty. The one fundamental thing that any citizen of any democratic nation should be able to expect of their government is honesty. There has not been anything honest about the approach of this government. Were they honest with the farmers of Saskatchewan when they provided the farm production loan program at 6 per cent and said hassle-free cash? We will never bother you. We want to be good. And then turn around this year, when the Premier is on one of his junkets down in the United States, have his department announce that it's now going to be nine and three-quarters per cent. Is that honesty? Is that fair? No, it's shocking. It's dishonest, and it's unfair.

And therefore, Mr. Chairman that budget is not meeting great favour with the public of Saskatchewan. And that's why the Minister of Finance feels he's got to stand up and attack people because he's got to divert, in his mind, a debate away from those real issues onto something else in the hope that it will distract people's attention. But it's not working; it's not working.

Now in this interim supply Bill, there are public servants and there are municipal grants that have to get paid. We're not opposing the interim supply Bill. But in this debate we're making it very clear that we did, and we will continue to, oppose the unfairness and the inadequacy of a budget that has been brought down by a government that is washed up and does not deserve to have the right to govern any more.

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, I was not going to speak about the . . . I was not going to speak on interim supply. It is traditional in the Assembly for interim supply to be some questions directed to the Minister of Finance with regards to one-twelfth of the expenditure of that particular month. That's what this interim supply Bill is traditionally about and has traditionally been about in this House for perhaps 50 years, Mr. Chairman.

So what are we hearing now, Mr. Speaker? What are we hearing now, Mr. Chairman? What we're hearing now is the members opposite saying, we're not opposed to this, we're going to vote in favour of it. But this debate started seven hours ago. Seven hours ago that this debate started, and they say, oh, we're going to vote in favour of it.

What they're doing, Mr. Chairman, is the following thing. They're holding this Bill up, they're holding this Bill up, Mr. Chairman, holding this Bill up knowing full well that tomorrow this Bill will not pass because they're going to try to drag it on and on and on. This Bill will not pass so that we will not be able to send cheques out to people in hospitals, to people in the schools, to local government.

Tomorrow, tomorrow, that's when that Bill has to be passed by in order to send those cheques out or people will go without their pay cheques. That's exactly what they're doing.

Seven hours ago we started on that. Did they ask questions of the Minister of Finance? Did one of them stand up and ask questions of the Minister of Finance, as you traditionally do? No, they stood, Mr. Chairman, and read from typewritten speeches, many of them running for 50, 50 to an hour, not asking a question, simply rolling out the rhetoric.

And why are they doing that, Mr. Chairman? Why they're doing that is the following, which is a reflection of what this institution quite frankly has become. This institution has become the following, **Mr. Chairman:** that what was traditionally done in this Assembly by way of debate, by way of asking questions, grievance before supply, which what the purpose of parliament is, what has it become? It has become nothing more than people standing up in this Assembly so they can be seen on television. That's exactly what this institution has become.

And I think it's time for all members to ask themselves, Mr. Chairman, to ask themselves, are we doing a service to the legislative system and to the legislative process? If this becomes nothing more than simply standing up day after day, making your speech to the television camera . . . Because that's all it's become, Mr. Chairman, absolutely all it has become.

And the speeches are pure repetitive, repetitive, repetitive, repetitive, in a place that is designed as the ultimate of debating institution of this province, and the fundamentals of what a legislative system is about. It's ceased to be a debating forum, Mr. Chairman. It has ceased to be a debating forum, and nothing more than a spot for everybody to stand up and speak on television. That's what it's become.

And I think we should ask ourselves: are we going in the right direction? Are we doing the right thing? And when we talk about the institution of parliament, perhaps sometimes we should think back and reflect about what parliament in fact is. Reflect about what in fact parliament is, Mr. Chairman, because that has not been done, that has not been done. Seven hours, seven hours, seven hours ago we started interim supply. Not one question posed to the minister, not one question posed to the minister who sat here, who here in his place for most of that seven hours listening — not one question. Simply stand up and give a speech, give a speech, 45, 50 minutes, rhetoric out. It's nothing more, Mr. Speaker . . . this has become nothing more than a free-time political broadcast, this institution. That is exactly what this institution is becoming, a free-time political broadcast for both sides. And where are we in this democratic system if all we have, all we have is free-time political broadcast. I think we have to look for a different way and a different way to deal with this.

The member from . . . The opposition House Leader raises a question, raises a question, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the *Public Accounts*. Mr. Chairman, the *Public Accounts* of this province have traditionally been filed when the Provincial Auditor files his report. That has been the case for at least 25 years in this province, 25 years in this province. The Provincial Auditor is independent, and nobody in this Assembly, I'm sure, will say anything but that. And that is the tradition of this House, the tradition of parliament that we seem now so ready to throw out — to throw out all concepts of parliamentary democracy as we rush towards the free-time political broadcast. And we've become a television studio here is what we've become, a television studio.

Mr. Speaker, the *Public Accounts* will be filed in the traditional way of parliament, and that is when the Provincial Auditor files his report. He can file his report whenever he wishes to file his report, and I assume he will do that very, very quickly.

(2115)

With regard to the question of attacking minorities. The member stands up and says we are attacking minorities — referring directly, Mr. Chairman, to Bill No. 2 dealing with the French language issue in this province — we're

defending . . . or we're attacking minorities. Mr. Speaker, that Bill has nothing to do with attacking minorities. We are left with a situation in this province where the Supreme Court came down with the decision that, if we were to implement that decision as the Supreme Court says, would cost this province \$15 million, and \$15 million right now. Now if you're talking about grievance before supply, if you're talking in this Assembly about how we should spend our money and how we should raise our revenues, let's then ask, where do you want to take that \$15 million from? Do you want to take it from more taxation? Do you want to crowd out something else? And those are legitimate decisions. Those are legitimate questions to be asked. And the members opposite say, in a simplistic way, you're simply attacking a minority. You're dealing with a real question there, Mr. Chairman, a real question. And we will have an opportunity to deal in much more detail with Bill 2 when it comes before this Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, the opposition also refers to the farmers, that we have nothing for the farmers. And I can go through the list if you want, but I want to read instead a speech delivered by the Leader of the Opposition back in — let's get to this — 1986; June 21, 1986. I think you should take some time to listen to this because he's speaking about farmers and he's speaking about free trade. I will read it and I will allow the rest of the Assembly to judge. Let me quote, Mr. Chairman.

To allow farmers or other primary producers unfettered access to the huge U.S. market, the American government is going to have to get something substantial in return. The Americans are too shrewd to give us a free lunch. What have they suggested in return?

Was the question posed by the Leader of the Opposition. And he answered that question, Mr. Speaker.

. . . that they will raise our dollar, which will mean interest rates will rise. We know what happened to farmers the last time interest rates went up.

What happened to farmers the last time interest rates went up? Nineteen eighty-one, 1981 interest rates are at 21 per cent and he says, we remember what happened when interest rates went up. What happened, Mr. Chairman, from the government of the day, of which he was the Deputy Premier, was nothing — nothing, Mr. Chairman. That's exactly their response to the farmer in 1981. Interest rates at 23 per cent, what kind of help did they bring forward? None. And what was their justification for it? We don't have enough money for that. Because their money was going, Mr. Chairman, a hundred million dollars of it, into buying people's farms — buying people's farms. And he says we have done nothing for the farmer.

I'm going to take a little time, Mr. Chairman, and read some of the things that have been done for the farmers in western Canada by Progressive Conservatives.

The livestock cash advance, estimated revenue to farmers or money to farmers, \$22.4 million. That's more than their budget was back in 1981 for agriculture totally.

Number two, livestock facility tax credit, \$2.6 million; agriculture development fund, over five years, \$200 million. That's not doing something for farmers, Mr. Chairman?

The production loan program, \$1.1 billion. Mr. Chairman, \$1.1 billion, and that's not responding to farmers?

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Agriculture credit corporation, low interest loans — in the hundreds of millions of dollars in low interest loans. The feeder association, supporting cattle feeding in Saskatchewan; the livestock investment credit; counselling and assistance for farmers; The Farm Land Security Act; the farmers' oil royalty refund; the rural enhancement program, and funding of \$78 million to the College of Agriculture — that they today were critical of and said, bit deal, what's that going to do for the farmer?

Well, Mr. Speaker, the College of Agriculture in this province has done a great deal for the farmer since its inception, and will continue to do under a new College of Agriculture for many, many years into the future.

And they fail to want to then reflect about what the federal government has done. That's what this government has done, failed to reflect about what the federal government has done in back to back years, in excess of a billion dollars a year alone in outright grants to farmers under the special Canadian grains program or the deficiency payment — over a billion dollars a year for two years.

And I'll tell you one thing, come next fall the federal government, the Progressive Conservative federal government, will be there for the farmers with at least another billion or more, Mr. Chairman, because that's where they've always been in the past. And that's not to refer to the stabilization programs, the various stabilization programs, the last one in fact pumping \$750 million.

I talked to a farmer the other day in my riding. He says, in the last three years, in the last three years on our farm, we have received more assistance — they had received one of these 50-year awards because their family had been on the farm for over 50 years — and they said, in the last three years we have received more assistance on our farm than my father and my grandfather who had farmed that land for 50 years had received in the 47 years before that. Forty-seven years — most of it were the NDP and the Liberals were in power in Saskatchewan and Ottawa. They have received more in three years than the 47 years before that.

And the members opposite vote against that type of support, Mr. Chairman. And they say you're giving them nothing, you're not helping the farmer, you have no programs for the farmer — how foolhardy, Mr. Chairman.

Let me close simply by stating again, and I say this to members of the House and I ask members of the House to give some consideration to the institution of parliament. As I said before, we have to be more than simply a

free-time political broadcast. The legislature has got to be more than simply a television studio. Surely it's got to be more than that, but that is unfortunately what we have made it into. And it's not all the members opposite; it's all members, quite frankly. But that is exactly what we have made it into, and it's wrong, Mr. Chairman. It's wrong. It's wrong. It's wrong.

Mr. Speaker, ask yourself what this Bill is. This Bill is asking the Assembly to award one-twelfth of the expenditures so that we can pay the bills tomorrow. It's asking the Assembly so that we can debate the budget from now till next year at this time, if we so desire. But surely we should pass this Bill so that the cheques can go out tomorrow; so that the cheque can go to the hospitals in each of our ridings, or to the school boards in each of our ridings, or to welfare payments that they so asked for some more. They say, give us more, and now they're basically stonewalling this Bill, filibustering this Bill, so in fact they will get nothing tomorrow.

I ask all members to put that aside. I ask all members, if you say you're going to support this, let's stand and approve this Bill so that we can send the money out to the people that so rely upon the government for that money. I plead all to stand and support that Bill on that purpose.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to have some closing remarks. And I say, first of all, that the worst speech here tonight was by the Minister of Finance. And the second worst speech was by the former minister of Finance.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — I think it's a sad spectacle, Mr. Chairman, to see a discredited Tory, a past Liberal, stand in this House tonight and be afraid to defend his budget.

Here is a Minister of Finance who is a disgrace to the finance community. Here is a Minister of Finance who is saying that the finance community . . . I'm sure must be laughing at him, must be laughing at this government. A Minister of Finance who couldn't come within \$800 million of his budget.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — A Minister of Finance that has absolutely no credit, no credibility left. And the Minister of Finance has the audacity to stand in this House and talk about morality, Mr. Chairman. The members over opposite, I tell you: he who has not sinned shall not cast the first stone, because I'll tell you, there are a number.

Allan Blakeney ran a government for 11 years — 11 years. And I'll tell you, there was scrupulous morality and integrity in 11 years of the Blakeney government. And I'll tell that you can't stand into the public and say that there is not a cloud over the past members of some cabinet members. I ask you to dare to say that you stand for families. Check around among your groups and ask how you stood for families and morality. That's the question.

I'm not going to stoop to the level of the Minister of Finance because I'm going to leave it there. But I ask the people of Saskatchewan to judge morality; judge the morality of the Allan Blakeney regime; and judge the morality of this government present. And I'll tell you, New Democrats will come out looking good.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — I stand here before you, Mr. Chairman, and the Minister of Finance gets up in the House, and I'll tell you, they're squealing, they're squealing, it's hurting.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, please, order. Order. Order, order. I ask all members just to calm down; I'm having trouble hearing the speaker.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to continue in a very determined way of setting out some of the issues that this budget does not address.

This government here, the Finance minister indicated, said oh yes, we have to have a competing society, a competing economic order. Well I'll tell you, isn't it strange that under Allan Blakeney and 11 years of New Democratic regime that we had 11 balanced budgets, that we were able to finance education. We had the best health care system in the world, and today, we've got a competing society.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — It's competing, Mr. Chairman. Do you know what it's competing? Outside multinational corporations picking off the assets of Saskatchewan against the people of Saskatchewan. And I'll tell you, there's no competition because it's being handed to them. They don't even have to compete. They come in to address the situation with this government, and I'll tell you, they walk right over them.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Weyerhaeuser picked up a pulp mill. Manalta Coal picked up a coal mine. The Americans and other provinces picked up our highway equipment. Eastern corporations picked up SaskMinerals. Well this is a competing and building society, I say. Well let's take a look at some of their economic performances.

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

(2130)

**Mr. Koskie:** — But before I get into that, let's take a look at some of the indicators of this here wonderful, competing society — this free enterprise. Let's take a look. Here are some of the indicators that they have been able to develop for the people of this province: the highest inflation rate in all of Canada; the fewest housing starts in the last decade; the highest number of farm bankruptcies in Canada last year; the second-highest incidence of low-income families in Canada; the slowest growth rate increase in the labour force in all of Canada — projected

deficit of \$328 million and a total deficit of \$3.7 billion. Are we ever humming, this society — this new, competitive society.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Aren't we building? We are building, I say — building, yes, for their bankers. The only ones that we're building for are the bankers, the bond dealers and eastern and outside-of-the-country multinational corporations, at a cost to the people of Saskatchewan.

I say to you, Mr. Chairman, \$26 million they have stripped from the seniors that have built this province, in their drug program. They had the meanness of spirit to destroy the best dental program in North America. And I say to you that not only that, they have laid on the backs of the people of this province taxes which are unconscionable. And they have cut corporate tax and also resource royalties.

You know, the former Minister of Finance got up, and you know what he said? He complained that we had a debate talking about his budget. Well I know why he is complaining, because he can't defend it.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — That's why he's complaining. They don't want to talk about their budget. Why would anybody want to talk about a budget that destroys our education system, destroys our health care system, destroys the drug program, the dental program? I say, no wonder they don't want a debate on the issues of the budget. And he stands up — and I know it must have felt like it was seven hours, but I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman, it wasn't seven hours. It just seemed like seven hours.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — It just seemed like seven hours because we beat them up on their own ground. We told them this budget is no good, and the people of Saskatchewan agree with us. Because we didn't debate it for seven hours — be about four and a half hours, but it seemed like seven. I think to the Minister of Finance it seemed longer because he's disappeared again.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — You know, they stand here with the hypocrisy or the audacity, audacity to come forward and say, you got to pass it because we got to get those cheques out. Well you know what? After the election, they never got a budget out until June, June 17th, and they say the opposition . . . Let's face it, Mr. Chairman, this government cannot defend the undefendable.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — That's the fact. Every indication indicates that this budget is being rejected by the people of Saskatchewan. And I'll tell you that this budget is going to drive a coffin into the future of that political party.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — And, Mr. Chairman, in closing these brilliant remarks, let me say . . . I say to you, Mr. Chairman, that we have a chance and an opportunity not only to debate but to have judgement on this budget. And I'll tell you, it took a long time before the Premier was able to pucker up his courage. But I'll tell you that over into Elphinstone and Eastview the people of Saskatchewan will speak, and the people of Saskatchewan will support the New Democrats and oppose that vicious, mean, hopeless budget.

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

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, please. Order, please.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** —

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$42,031,000 be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 months ending March 31, 1989.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, please. Order, please. I would ask that this House please come to order.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Minister, I would like to ask you what the financial community thought of you being \$800 million out in respect to your budget.

But also I want to ask you is that: have you gone through this, and have you talked to the Minister of Urban Affairs and the Minister of Education to see that, in fact, that you have the right figures, because last year you came in with an interim supply, and suddenly you realized that you hadn't consulted, and the city of Yorkton weren't able to get their funds.

So could you just give us your complete assurance that you have done the proper checking and that what you're asking for here will cover the . . .

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — . . . the basic needs as indicated.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I'd made some comments earlier about the change in the critic positions. If I recall last year when there was an error on the Appropriations Bill, that the opposition critic of the day was able to pick it out himself. I'm assuming that with the active co-operation of the former finance critic, that I'm sure that if there had been an error he would have identified it already.

And so I indicate to the hon. member that, just for his edification, that if we go beyond the one-twelfth as we debated last year, there's an appendix or a schedule indicating the departments that would get more. This is the straight one-twelfth, and that's precisely what it is.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well I appreciate that assurance, but your facts are wrong again, because it was your Minister of Urban Affairs, when we raised the attention of the Yorkton situation, who indicated that it was our negligence, not yours, in drawing up the appropriation.

And you were the one that didn't consult; you were the one that didn't supply sufficient funds for the city of Yorkton.

I just want to ask you, Mr. Minister, just in respect — and I'll get into details when the budget comes forward — but one of the significant things that what we are dividing up here, what we're dividing up, is a twelfth, approximately, of the total budget which you have put forward. And one of the things that I see here, and running through it, I was wondering whether you could confirm whether the largest revenue source, in respect to the increases, is that, in fact equalization payments, because we have now qualified again as a Tory number first — a have-not province.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Let me indicate while my officials are pulling the figure to put equalization in perspective. I was surprised that you raised it.

Equalization came into effect in 1958. Since 1958 there have been six years — in the province's history since 1958 — where we have been classified as a have province, that is, having paid more in to equalization than we've taken out. Now one of those years was under the Liberal government of Ross Thatcher. One year was under the 11 years of Allan Blakeney, and four years of the six were under the administration of this government where we paid more into equalization than we got out. Only six times in the last 30 years; four under our jurisdiction.

Secondly, equalization now makes up approximately 10 per cent of our revenue base. In 1972-73 it was approximately 25 per cent — 24 point-some change. That's a quarter of our provincial revenues. In 1972-73 under your administration . . . were from equalization. And in 1973 it was still 21 per cent.

So I indicate . . . well I can take it a step further. As a matter of fact, in 1982 of your last budget, it turned out that there was an overpayment to your administration of \$125 that we finished paying off last year.

So on the equalization formula, yes, there's an increase, I've indicated that. I've given a history of equalization that of the 30 years, only six has Saskatchewan ever paid in.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I just want to ask, Mr. Minister, whether, within the appropriations, whether he gave any consideration to undoing the damage that you have done to the drug program and to the dental program, the best dental program Saskatchewan and North America has seen.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — A drug program which was decimated. A drug program which you gave to the people of this province a guarantee that not only would you improve but that you would remove all of the prescription fees. And look what you have given to the sick people and the elderly people that need drugs.

And I ask you whether you have seriously considered within this appropriation to make some amends to the destruction that you have done to those programs.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Well I believe that the Minister of Health was yesterday or today in Cut Knife opening a new dental office, and I believe there are now 27 or 28 that have already been opened. I do suggest to the hon. member that where the dental offices are being opened in rural Saskatchewan, they're being well-received. And I would hope that the hon. member would acknowledge that.

Secondly, the debate tonight is on the one-twelfth of the expenditures, and any policy announcements on any programs would be made in the appropriate manner.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989, the sum of \$42,031,000 be granted out of the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund.

Motion agreed to.

The committee reported progress.

(2145)

## FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF RESOLUTIONS

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that the resolutions be now read the first and second time.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the resolutions read a first and second time.

## APPROPRIATION BILL

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — By leave of the Assembly, I move:

That Bill 4, An Act Granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year Ending on March 31, 1989, be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill read a first time.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — By leave of the Assembly, and under rule 48(2), I move that the Bill be now read a second and third time.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill read a second and third time and passed under its title.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:48 p.m.