

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure, on behalf of my colleague, the member representing the Estevan high school, Mr. Johnson, to welcome to the Assembly through you, Mr. Speaker, 14 grade 12 students from the Esterhazy High School in Esterhazy. They're accompanied by their teacher Norm Overland, and chaperon Donna Overland. And I look very much forward to meeting with them — I gather outside; it's a beautiful day — after question period this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all hon. members to welcome the grade 12 students from Esterhazy who have travelled here today to join with us. Welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join the Minister of Finance in welcoming the group from Esterhazy. I had the pleasure of sharing lunch with that group, and Norm and Donna Overland as well. I enjoyed their company during lunch, and I can assure members that the questions they asked afterwards were tough. My sincere hope is that they will ask equally tough questions of the Minister of Finance when they get the opportunity later on today.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to other members of the Assembly, a group of 29 grade 8 students from Silverwood Heights School in Saskatoon, in the Mayfair constituency.

They're accompanied today by their teachers Mr. Don Stiller and Miss Bev Zahariuk, chaperon Mr. Art Friesen, and bus driver Mr. Greg Johansson. And I look forward to meeting with this group at 3 o'clock for pictures and refreshments.

And I would ask all members to give this group from Silverwood Heights a warm welcome to the legislature this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you, a group of grade 12 students from the community of Wawota, Wawota High School, 14 grade 12 students who are here with their teacher Harold Laich.

Wawota is a very progressive community and a very sports-minded community. I'm glad that the students were able to come up and take in the session. I trust they'll have an enjoyable time. Enjoy the proceedings. I look forward to meeting with them afterwards. Would the

members join me in welcoming the students and their teacher to the session this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, it's my real pleasure today to introduce two friends and guests from Great Britain. They are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, in the first pew: Roy and Audrey Gray from London, England.

Mr. Speaker, it will be of interest to members to know that Mr. Grey has served in public life in Great Britain and has been honoured as a freeman of the City of London. They are here touring Regina and Saskatchewan and western Canada. They are accompanied today by their hosts in western Canada, in Regina, Lionel and Doreen Hender.

And so I would ask all members to welcome these friends and guests from London.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and to all members of the Assembly, seven grade 7 and 8 students from Dales House located in the constituency of Regina Rosemont. They're here today accompanied by their teacher Kathy Hill, and their chaperon Rob Reiter.

They've been touring the legislature, and I will meet them and thank them for the opportunity of getting out of the legislature out onto the front lawn after question period today. And I'd ask all members here to give them a warm welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Kopelchuck: — Mr. Speaker, we'll save the last for the best. I'm very proud to introduce to you, and to the members of the legislature, 48 students from the Canora Junior Elementary School. They are located in the west gallery. They are accompanied by two teachers today, Mr. Ron Hoehn and Mrs. Marg Pretli. They're also accompanied by two bus drivers, Mr. Nick Zawislak and Mr. Dave Heshka.

They are in Regina for the day. They are touring the city, as well as a visit to the legislature. And I would just like to tell the children that I hope their visit here today is educational, is interesting, but please still have some fun while you're here. But be easy on your teachers.

Please join with me in welcoming these children to our legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Federal Aid for Drought Relief

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Deputy Premier, in the absence of the Premier, or perhaps the Acting Minister of Agriculture, and it has to do with a recent Canadian Press story pertaining to the

announcement by the federal government of drought relief.

According to this story, Mr. Deputy Premier, Mr. Wise has announced a total package of \$12 million for the digging of some wells and pipelines for all of western Canada, or the four western provinces, as compared to say \$20 million for the province of Alberta alone, announced by the province of Alberta for its people.

My question to you, sir, is this: is this the sum total of what Saskatchewan is going to get from the federal government by way of drought assistance and drought relief program? Is this it, or is there more to come? If there's more to come, what is to be announced; can the minister tell us what is on the agenda?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to respond to the Leader of the Opposition on that question. The announcement this morning deals only with the area of the drought relief program that was announced by Sask Water a few days ago, and it basically means that the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) will be bringing their portion of the drought assistance to a 50-50 operation with the Government of Saskatchewan. And we're very much appreciative of the amount that they've put in. It will be an additional approximately four and a half million brought into PFRA budget for the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Speaker, a new question — I guess it is to the Minister of the Environment in the light of this answer. Mr. Minister, I am asking questions of this government as it pertains to a meeting which is going on in Calgary right now, or apparently has concluded in Calgary, where the amount of money that the federal government has dedicated to the drought assistance to the Prairies is \$12 million, new money. We're not talking about PFRA, but for all of the four western provinces, \$12 million, is that all there is? How much of this is going to come to Saskatchewan, this \$12 million? And won't you admit that it's too little and too late? Is that the best that this Premier could negotiate from Mr. Mulroney and his PC friends in Ottawa?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — I think that the hon. member is getting a little excited here, and maybe should stop and give time for the meeting to finalize in Alberta and for the announcement for the cattle side to come out, and that will come later.

This only deals with the drilling of wells and the piping and that sort of thing. And I indicated to you that it's an increase in the expenditures PFRA will have in our province of about four and a half million — they normally spend about two. So this is about twice as much as they normally have had, and I'm very appreciative of at least that much assistance.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The minister says that I should wait because the meeting is going on. Here it is,

Mr. Minister, effectively June 1, and the farmers and the people of this province of Saskatchewan have been asked by your government and Mr. Mulroney to do one thing, and that is to wait and to wait, while the Prairies burn up and your government does nothing whatsoever except sing the Hallelujah Chorus to the PCS in Ottawa. I want you to assure the people that you're going to get something done now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to listen to the Leader of the Opposition. We do have a meeting going on in Alberta today to deal with drought assistance for the livestock side of the agriculture scene. They may also deal with the crop insurance side because that's another area that needs to be addressed.

You can't deal with drought in that context until you're certain that you're going to have a drought. And although it's been looking difficult for some time, the government could not respond until you move down the road a piece.

When you talk about it in April, yes, we were concerned and the federal government was concerned and were making plans, and our government has been making plans. But the finalization of those plans will now be put in place. I believe the timing is right, and as the ministers of Agriculture are meeting today, I believe that the farmers are satisfied that the government has responded when they've had need before, and they will respond again as the need occurs again today.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Minister of the Environment. His answers remind me of a variation of the old Chinese torture test, a drop at a time. Is the government's position that the drought is not here? Is it the minister's position that in the face of all of the evidence that we can see, and the feel and the taste, and all of the complaints that the farmers and the people of Saskatchewan are mounting, and the rationing of water here in Regina, that your government is going to await the time until we're certain that the drought is here?

I say to you, Mr. Minister, that that kind of action, that kind of response is negligent. Why doesn't your government get on with the job of announcing a comprehensive drought assistance program for our farming people now? That's the answer that we want to have.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the member should listen and not just talk. Sometimes he needs to have a little lesson. I announced in early May . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order, order. Unfortunately there are several people wanting to answer the question, and I think that we should just allow the Minister of the Environment to do so.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — . . . I announced approximately three weeks ago that the Saskatchewan Water Corporation was going to provide assistance, and I laid out the whole program to you. The federal government has agreed to

cost-share that program, and that's basically what's being announced today. And it was at the initiative of the Saskatchewan Water Corporation that this came forward.

We have put in place 50 per cent assistance for wells. That has never been done at any time in the history of this province, never. And not only that, cabinet has approved that that date start effective January 1 of 1988. So that gives the people across this province good assistance for wells throughout the whole of this year. I believe that that's responding to the needs of agriculture and the needs of prairie farmers and prairie people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a final question to the Minister of the Environment. Mr. Minister, can you tell us how many farmers have sold off their herds? I want to have you answer that question. And I want to also have you answer the question, Mr. Minister, this way. How in the world can you justify this snail's pace announcement of policy a drop at a time — this snail's pace policy of a drop at a time, Mr. Minister — how can you justify this relatively paltry sum of money when the federal government, your buddies in Ottawa, have got \$8 billion for nuclear submarines and not enough for a drought assistant program for the prairies? How can they justify that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I recall when farmers were in difficulty before with high interest rates and a number of things when the hon. member was on the government side of the House. What did he say? We can't do anything; that's a federal responsibility.

This government has taken the responsibility and taken it seriously, and we have provide assistance and back-dated it to January 1. The farm community is very happy with the progress of this government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Modified Ward System

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs. Mr. Minister, today, avoiding the legislature, you had a scrum in the hallways of this building and you announced in this scrum that you were going to impose a two-tier electoral system on our cities here in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Minister, it is well known, and there is evidence across all of Canada where this system has been tried, and it has failed and it has been rejected. As a matter of fact, you yourself said it was not a good system. On March 22 in the Leader-Post, you said the following, and I quote to you:

The modified ward system has some disadvantages because it leads to a very confusing municipal ballot and because it would create two classes of alderman.

Now, Mr. Minister, in light of that pronouncement that

you made, how do you now justify imposing this confusing municipal ballot and this two classes of alderman in our cities?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I believe I was undergoing their wrath because I refused to consult and I didn't listen to what was going on.

An Hon. Member: And you didn't.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope the opposition stays calm enough for a few minutes so that I can offer the explanation.

Throughout the consultative process that this government firmly believes in, I think that probably the best example of belief in the consultation process has occurred, particularly when members opposite and, I would dare say, a lot of the people understood clearly where I stood on the ward system.

And after all of this consultation we decided, as government, particularly after our discussions with SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), who were not obviously concerned with the two classes of alderman as I was — they said, no, they didn't believe that that would occur; there would not be two classes of alderman.

And as far as it related to the ballot and a confusing ballot, they said, on the contrary, the ballot will be shorter, and the true democratic process will occur because now the people of our cities will be able to vote not only for their ward alderman, but also in fact for the alderman at large. And as a result, they will be in a position to vote for the majority of their council, and that's democracy in its best, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, you may have listened, but you obviously didn't hear, because everyone who spoke to you, including municipalities and SUMA, said that you should leave this decision up to the voters and the municipalities, and you've taken that decision away from them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — You clearly didn't have the good sense to leave well enough alone, nor the courage to put into practice and legislation the things that you wanted to do in the first place.

Now, since everyone in the province — municipalities and SUMA and groups of people from all walks of life — have said that you should leave the system the way it is, can I ask you to answer this question: who is it that you're trying to satisfy with this arbitrary legislation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that the people that I'm trying to satisfy are the urban voters. They're the ones that I'm concerned with, and the taxpayers of our cities . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, order. Order. The minister.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems that the opposition is never interested in hearing my response. But I'll tell you where the arbitrary imposition came and that was in 1973 when the NDP government, against two plebiscites in Regina, against the plebiscite in Saskatoon, imposed the ward system. Now they have nerve to say, what are you doing?

The ward system is still in place, Mr. Speaker. We at least gave them an option. It's a modified ward system; it has the best of two models. It has the parts of the ward system where the taxpayer still has a ward representative, and it also has the at large system where the taxpayer can certainly elect the members at large. And we didn't just arbitrarily impose one system versus the other, but rather we have come up with a good compromise, a good modified plan that the people of the cities should readily accept, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It's like everything else this government does; this is a corruption of democracy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Minister, the voters' of municipalities told you what they want. In 1978, in Regina over 70 per cent, they said they want the ward system. In Saskatoon they did similarly. In Prince Albert they voted in their ward system. You've taken that option away. Can I ask you then to tell us which voters in municipalities are you responding to in light of all the evidence of people who want to keep it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, again they try to discolour fact. The member says that the plebiscite indicated the retention of the ward system. After it had been in place, after the people got used to working with it, but at the time that the ward system was put in, it was put in by that group over there when they were in government; the NDP government imposed it on the largest cities in Saskatchewan. In spite of the fact the plebiscite said no, they still imposed it, and now they've got the audacity to stand up here and accuse us of meddling.

Now all we have done is discussed and consulted for the last 18 months, and the people that we are concerned with, Mr. Speaker, are indeed the taxpayer. And that is where our concern lies. And if we can bring some efficiencies and help bring these efficiencies to the

operations of our municipalities, we believe that it is the responsibility of the government to do that. Times change. This modified system has never been tried in our province, and perhaps it's on the leading edge of new, modern municipal government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Increase in STC Passenger Rates

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for Saskatchewan Transportation Company. Minister, could you confirm that our bus company, Saskatchewan Transportation Company, is going to increase its passenger rates up to 20 per cent, effective tomorrow?

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can confirm that over the past number of months there have been applications before the Highway Traffic Board, by not only the Saskatchewan Transportation Company but by other various bus companies that serve people in Saskatchewan. Those increases, I understand, have been approved by the Highway Traffic Board, and I understand that they will come into effect in the very near future.

Respecting the amount of 20 per cent increase, I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is accurate. The increases will be coming, I believe tomorrow. The rate increases have not been increased in STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) for a period of three or four years, I believe. But in no way will the rates increase 20 per cent. That's not correct.

Mr. Trew: — New question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, the rates from Saskatoon to Kamsack are currently \$20.30; they're going to \$24.85 tomorrow. If that's not 20 per cent, I don't know what is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Trew: — Since you people took government, the only thing you have done with Saskatchewan Transportation Company, you sell off buses, trade newer buses for older buses. Is that what the people of Saskatchewan can expect from you?

Why is it everything you have touched turns bad for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan? Why is it every cost to the people of Saskatchewan your government influences in any way has gone up in the past two years? And when can Saskatchewan people expect a break?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are up to their same old scare tactic tricks. The member will use a one single example where rates were adjusted and say all the rates are going up by 20 per cent. The member has selectively chosen one rate that we adjusted, but by no means, Mr. Speaker, are all rates going up 20 per cent.

Now the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, will complain about the rates are going up. He complains last week and the week before that about STC losing money. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan Transportation Company is

under severe financial pressures today. Every bus company across this country is under severe economic pressures. But, Mr. Speaker, I say that it is a good thing that this government has chosen to maintain service to rural Saskatchewan, which is of fundamental importance. And we will not, Mr. Speaker, embark on a campaign like the members opposite did and have fancy, luxury buses running up and down the highways. Our services go into rural Saskatchewan. We are serving the people the best we can.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Trew: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the same minister. Minister, I have other examples of a 20 per cent increase, and you should certainly be aware of it; if not, you certainly don't have a handle on your department.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Trew: — The average age of the bus fleet has gone from 4.8 years, when you took office, to over 10.1 years now. You're running STC into the ground. It's well known, Mr. Minister, that your government intends to hang the "For Sale" sign on STC just like you intend to hand the "For Sale" sign up on all of Saskatchewan assets.

Is that not what's really behind this money grab? Are you just now adjusting the passenger rates so that when you friends in big business buy our bus company that they'll have higher profit margin? And once again, Mr. Minister, are you not putting the interests of your big business friends ahead of the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a very difficult time in following the member's logic. I'll review quickly with you, Mr. Speaker, some of the problems we face with the STC company. Indeed our buses are ageing. Indeed the losses are high in STC. Indeed the rates have had to be increased. Indeed we are losing . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, indeed the buses are ageing, indeed the company is losing tremendous amounts of money, indeed there are specific routes that are subsidized heavily by the taxpayers of the province. But, Mr. Speaker, the opposition has yet to come up with one concrete solution, one concrete solution.

Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard; we are exploring all possibilities. And I would invite, I would invite the members opposite to come forth with some reasonable solutions — not to stand and complain about every single thing.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to once again reinforce that no matter what the NDP say, no matter what the NDP say, service to rural Saskatchewan will be maintained, and if it takes some money to do that, Mr. Speaker, we will continue, we will continue to expend moneys on serving the people of rural Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Environmental Approval for Rafferty-Alameda Dams

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier, the minister responsible for SaskPower. I have here, Mr. Minister, a *Hansard* from April 11 of this year, at which time you assured this House that federal approval for the Rafferty-Alameda dams was coming, and I quote, "... sooner rather than later."

On Thursday of last week, the federal Environment minister stood in the House of Commons and said that he doesn't have sufficient information to make a decision, so how is it that you can stand in this House and assure us that approval will be coming shortly, when even as late as last week, even now, the federal minister's saying he doesn't have enough information?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I still have a very high level of confidence that the approval will be coming sooner rather than later.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I think that members opposite will go into a terminal depression the day that that approval comes. Those members, Mr. Speaker, those members take great delight, great delight in the plight of agricultural Saskatchewan today, Mr. Speaker, great delight in the suffering that's going on because, Mr. Speaker, of the drought that we're experiencing at this particular time, and at the same time they do everything in their power to stop the best water management project that this province has ever seen.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — And, Mr. Speaker, it will be a very happy day for Saskatchewan when that approval is finally in place.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, we are talking here about the biggest political boondoggle this province has seen.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Minister, the federal Minister of the Environment said in an interview with the press following his comments in the House of Commons, the federal minister said, I cannot issue the permit as long as there are big gaps in the information base.

Obviously the only conclusion we can come to is that there's some serious inadequacies in the environmental impact study. Mr. Minister, what are the gaps; what information is missing; and why aren't you providing that information to the federal minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I want to talk a little bit about political boondoggles, Mr. Speaker. Political boondoggles . . . was it 1979, I believe it was that very

member, the member sitting in the Leader of the Opposition's chair today, approved Lanigan phase 2, Lanigan phase 2, which is the root of our over-capacity problem today, Mr. Speaker, in the potash industry — the root of the problem, preceded by the nationalization of the industry, that built two mines with Saskatchewan taxpayers' money in New Brunswick to compete with our industry here in the province now. If you want to know what a boondoggle is, I've just described one.

Compare that, Mr. Speaker, to a dam, a Rafferty dam, that provides for cooling, cooling to a Shand project, Mr. Speaker, a thermal plant at Shand that is desperately needed in these years of low water flow where our hydro capacity is working at 20, 30 per cent because of river flows, Mr. Speaker. And those people call it a political boondoggle.

Mr. Speaker, it will be a sad day for Saskatchewan, for the country, if those people ever get into office in any province, in any place in the country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 53 — An Act to amend The Provincial Mediation Board Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Provincial Mediation Board Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 54 — An Act to amend The Land Titles Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Land Titles Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I would like to take this opportunity to lay on the Table the *Report of the Provincial Auditor* to the Legislative Assembly for the year ending 1987.

Order. Order. I think hon. members will have plenty of time to debate the auditor's report.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTION UNDER RULE 16

Measures Needed to Counter Problems of Drought and Farm Debt

Mr. Upshall: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak in the Assembly today on this issue of great importance to Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan farmers, Saskatchewan urbanites, and the Saskatchewan

economy in general. At the end of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'll be moving a motion along these lines:

That the Assembly urge the Governments of Saskatchewan and Canada to implement immediately measures to assist Saskatchewan farmers facing crisis situations caused by drought and unbearable levels of farm debt.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe I have but one point to make today, and that point is the incompetence of this Tory government and the federal Tory government in handling farm situations, especially situations of crisis.

Statistics show us, Mr. Speaker, that drought . . . we are in a worse drought in many areas than in the history of this province. To recognize this fact, we have statistics showing that the level of rainfall precipitation in Saskatchewan is at levels of 40 to 50 per cent of normal in some areas and even less in other areas.

But what is even more disturbing, Mr. Speaker, is that in 1985 the federal government, Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Wise, the present minister, made an announcement on November 27. And I would just like to read that announcement. He said that \$150 million program he is announcing:

. . . will provide immediate relief and we will continue our efforts to develop a long-term approach to emergency funding.

He went on to say:

It is disruptive to producers to live with the uncertainty of not knowing what back-up assistance they will receive when natural disasters occur, nor is it easy for the federal government to take on substantial new financial commitments which have not been previously budgeted. This is why we are viewing the crop disaster assistance program as a field test for permanent emergency assistance programs which could be offered to farmers as a complement or extension of the current crop insurance programs.

Mr. Minister, that commitment was made in 1985 and out of that commitment what have we seen? We have seen no new programs. In 1985 the program was to increase crop insurance by 10 per cent. We have seen no long-term commitment to the livestock industry with regards to crisis situations as we are seeing right now. We have seen the federal government sit on it's hands after making an announcement and now wait till farmers are again in a crisis situation before they and this government will get together to implement some type programs for the farmers of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Now, Mr. Minister, I ask this government, today is May 31. We have had a crisis situation from drought in the livestock sector two or three months previous to this, and in fact it's been building over the years. All the indicators have been there that there's a problem, and what is the response of this government?

This government responds by hoping for rain. And I'll tell you, we all hope for rain, Mr. Speaker, but it doesn't help those people who are directly affected by a drought situation.

We have not seen any long-term programs in place. We have yet to see what assistance there will be as far as freight or transportation of either livestock to feed, or feed to livestock. We have seen nothing with regards to opening up Crown lands to grazing. We have seen nothing with regards to a program to assist farmers for this winter's feed because there's going to be a great shortage of feed around the province. Nothing concrete, and it's May 31.

And the Premier of this province stands in his place and he says: well go ahead boys and do whatever you like; we'll cover you. And today we see an announcement of \$12 million for western Canada. Well I'm just not sure how he's going to manage covering everybody with that amount of money.

The major problem that we're having, Mr. Speaker, is that we have an industry, the industry of agriculture, in crisis. We have one sector of that industry that is currently faced with a drought, the livestock sector.

The livestock sector in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, has come through some very tough times. It's come through low prices and farmers have been forced into . . . or many farmers are forced into divesting themselves of their herds.

And now at a time when livestock and livestock prices are climbing up — they're better than they've been in a long while — and farmers should be in a position to expand their herds, to make major improvements in their facilities, to make their operations better and more efficient, what do they have to do?

Because of the lack of response from this government and the federal government, they are being forced to cull their herds. And in some cases, Mr. Speaker, they are being forced to in fact get rid of their herds. Many farmers with livestock are scrambling around trying to find places to graze their cattle. There are people from the south-west who have already taken their cattle over to the east side of this province, co-operating between farmer to farmer.

Where's the government? That's the question I ask. Where's the government two months ago, three months ago, a year ago, when this impending drought was coming upon us? And they sit here today and they tell us that announcements are coming. It's just like the debt program that they have. And I call it the Tory debt program. And the effect of this is that farmers are in a crippling situation with regards to their income.

And what is the response? I believe, Mr. Minister, that it is intended by this government and the federal government, due to the political nature of this, that they let farmers in this province go down on their knees and beg before they come up with any programs. And I say that because it is then they feel that the farmers will really appreciate any program put in by the Tory government. And that is a decrepit, low-life, crass way of handling the farm

situation in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Upshall: — The drought in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is basically centred in the Palliser Triangle of Saskatchewan. We have seen this drought, as in Regina, the worst in 88 years — in Swift Current the worst drought in 101 years.

With this drought, the statistics show that the chance of recovery by the end of June, Mr. Speaker, runs about in the range of 30 per cent. And that means that we have to have a phenomenal amount of rainfall just to bring us back to normal by the end of June.

And although that could happen, Mr. Speaker, we can't rely on it. And if we can't rely on it, we have to have programs in place that defend the farmers against this crisis situation — \$6 billion worth of debt Saskatchewan farmers hold; a pending drought that could even further erode their income.

Mr. Speaker, I tell you that the farmers of this province, the people working in small towns, people in Regina and Saskatoon, nobody in this province can afford to see those farmers lose even a further amount of their income. And while the government sits on its hands and waits for rain and drags its feet and makes more and more announcements on debt, on drought, we are losing our farmers.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, why this government and the federal government cannot or will not come up with a program. There have been suggestions by this side of the House; there have been suggestions by farm organizations. We all know what's to be done. But yet they sit on their hands and drag their feet.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, I think the major point here is that this government is incompetent, it's incapable of handling the drought situation, it's capable of handling the debt situation, and the result is that it throws up its hands in despair and does nothing.

(1445)

Today we are seeing the Minister of Agriculture, federal Minister of Agriculture, meeting with the provinces. Out of that meeting, Mr. Minister, I ask: will there be something concrete for the long term? Will there be something concrete for the short term? We have to put our industry . . . We have to maintain our industry — the beef industry, the livestock industry in general, and the grains industry.

The crop insurance program has not had any major adjustments to it since 1985, and the adjustments made then were very, very minimal. We have seen crop insurance . . . the level of assistance not follow the income related to farm income. Even in the south, south of our borders, Mr. Speaker, we have seen the Governor of North Dakota make an announcement that it was a disaster area in his state.

Now Governor George Sinner has a program in place,

Mr. Speaker, with 12 points. Those point cover everything from grazing to transportation to the commodity credit corporation of the loan guarantee program. That is the type of long-term program that we need in Saskatchewan. And it's beyond me, it is beyond me to know why this government fails to co-operate with the farmers of this province in order to maintain the basic industry we have, and that's grains and livestock.

Mr. Speaker, we have also great urgency for this because we see other aspects that are affected. There's the wildlife aspect; there's the environmental aspect. And we're asking farmers today to try to make a living on the income that they're getting without eroding the soil, without mining the soils.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that just doesn't work. A farmer who has had very short pasture right now and who maybe has some small growth is going to be overgrazing those pastures, even though he knows he's not doing the right thing, because the government has failed to let him know what he can do if he can't afford to do it on his own. And this is the major problem.

If I have the money, if I'm a livestock producer and I have the money to move my cattle, to get a loan to feed them or to transport them, then I can wait. But as we know, because of the debt situation, many farmers don't have that wherewithal to do that. And the government sits down, sits on their hands, and does nothing — waiting for rain, making further announcements. And I'll say, Mr. Minister, announcements won't feed the cattle; announcements won't keep the people on the land.

There are many, many situations in Saskatchewan where the farmers are throwing up their hands and saying: I have to go; there's no point in fighting any longer. And I ask this government, why? In light of things like that that are happening, why are they waiting so long?

We heard an announcement a few weeks ago on water. And that was fine if you looked at the statistics from the water corporation, the most recent statistics. Because the announcement was so late coming, the number of wells drilled and tested are actually, in some cases, lower, in some cases, the same as they were last year. Because the announcement wasn't soon enough, people didn't know what was coming or what they could do. Basically, they didn't have the funds to do it and they had to wait, bringing them down to their knees.

Mr. Speaker, the provincial Government of Saskatchewan has an obligation. The federal Government of Canada has an obligation. That obligation is to maintain the industry in western Canada, and in our case Saskatchewan, to have a long-term program that will kick in in any disaster situation, whether it be drought or insects or anything else or flooding. We don't have that.

We have programs that are based on political expediency. They are waiting for the right time to do the right thing so that the farmers of this province will actually, when they're on their knees, say, well thank you, thank you very much. And I say, that is not the way, that is not the commitment, and that is not what the

people of this province need. We need a government with foresight, we need a government with some compassion and we need a government that is competent and capable of running these programs.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think we have that. And that is why we on this side of the House have constantly asked this government to implement programs, asking them to speed up the process to let farmers know what's happening.

So with that . . . One minute? Okay, Mr. Speaker, with that I will move, seconded by the member from Quill Lakes:

That this Assembly urge the Governments of Saskatchewan and Canada to implement immediately measures to assist Saskatchewan farmers facing crisis situations caused by drought and unbearable levels of farm debt.

I so move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to comment on two of the central problems that are facing agriculture today, and our resolution addresses those two problems, basically the drought situation and also the debt situation.

I was surprised today to be in this House and, with the problems that are confronting agriculture in respect of the drought, particularly in the south-west of this province, that the minister stood here today, the Minister of Environment, and indicated that they're waiting to see if it progresses and becomes worse.

I can only say, Mr. Speaker, that the situation with the drought is very, very severe. The statistics on this particular drought show that it is probably more encompassing and more well-entrenched than virtually any time previous in the history of recorded weather.

It indicates here that the drought in areas affected in Saskatchewan — in Saskatoon it's the worst drought that has had for 81 years; in Regina the worst in 88 years; in Swift Current it's the worst drought in 101 years.

If we take a look at the weather on the Prairies, and the maps indicate, Mr. Speaker, that in Lloydminster the percentage of normal precipitation from April 1 to May 17 — and we have more up-to-date maps — that Lloydminster had only 24 per cent of normal precipitation; North Battleford, some 12 per cent of normal precipitation; Saskatoon, 11 per cent; Biggar, 11 per cent; Kindersley, 26 per cent; Swift Current, 23 per cent; Maple Creek, 10 per cent of normal precipitation.

And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker, that this is indeed a very major crisis confronting the cattlemen and the agricultural community in the area that I've mentioned, primarily in the south-west, stretching from Lloydminster to Rosetown, across to Saskatoon, over through Moose Jaw and into the Swift Current, the Gravelbourg, Ponteix, and Assiniboia area. This is the area that it is most damaging to the ranchers, to the cattlemen. And this

government has stood by and has watched it, and the minister says we have to monitor further before any further assistance.

I want to say that it's no secret that agriculture is the backbone of our economy; that one of the pluses that has been going on is that in the cattle industry there has been a considerable upturn in the prices. And surely it would be a great set-back to the cattle industry here in Saskatchewan if the government were not to respond to assist cattlemen to maintain their herds.

The loss of herds would seriously affect the cattle industry. If assistance isn't given, many of the farmers are unable to finance alternative measures. And I may say that what we need, Mr. Speaker, as the member from Humboldt indicated, is government action now and not later.

We read the various press reports and I can only indicate, Mr. Speaker, in respect to the area down by Ponteix, the soil in this farmer's, Mr. Wellbrock's, 2,000 acre farm is so dry that he hasn't even started seeding. And another individual here by the name of Mr. McFarlane has already moved part of his 86-head cow herd north to pasture. His 250-acre, tame grass pasture resembles a parking lot rather than a field to support life.

And the minister stands in this House and he says the federal government and the provincial governments have to stand by and wait to determine whether a drought is upon us. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that what we need here is a government that will initiate long-term solutions as well as ad hoc, on-the-spot solutions.

The people of the province will indeed co-operate. I say that working people and small-business people and professional people will support and financial assistance to our farmers who are in difficult situation because of a natural disaster, the drought.

So I ask the government here to take effective steps, to put in an effective program to help to alleviate the problems.

We have tried here, in this House, Mr. Speaker, to raise this issue to the government. We've raised it by initiating an emergency debate, and this government, the members opposite, refuse to let us debate the emergency of the drought situation. They turned it down.

Later we tried another provision under rule 17, also trying to raise the concern of the drought situation. And although it was ruled to be an emergency situation, it was considered by Mr. Speaker at that time to be a long-term, continuing, and therefore would not be debated.

So I want to say that members on this side of the House have been aware of the plight of the farmers in south-western and western Saskatchewan, and we have tried to move and to speak on behalf of them, and the government has prevented us in every turn. And accordingly, what we are doing today is rule 16 debate is raising that concern.

I can only say that in respect to the announcement today,

it leaves much to be desired. In the telex, it indicated that Mr. Wise, the federal Minister of Agriculture, told reporters that he's announcing \$12 million aid for the prairie farmers stricken by drought. And he said that the money will be used to help producers, particularly those in livestock industry, to help them build wells, water pipelines, dug-outs, so that they can feed and water their livestock.

Well I don't think you can feed your livestock by having a supply of water. And there is a desperate need of either getting cattle to the pastures or getting feed to the ranchers in southern Saskatchewan.

All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is this government and the federal government has clearly indicated that the only time that they will act is for political reasons. The only time they will act is if there's an election coming, in the offing. The federal government is now at the stage of about to call — if they dare — a federal election. And mercifully, the farmers of southern Saskatchewan, once they are down on their knees, they may get some further assistance from this government providing it's politically expedient for the federal government and the provincial government to offer assistance.

I want to say that in 1985, when the drought hit the south-west Saskatchewan, that we had eight members in our caucus and we took a tour through south-western Saskatchewan and we visited municipal councils, we visited financial institutions, like credit unions; we met with business men; we went throughout south-western Saskatchewan to draw attention to the plight of the farmers at that time. And only after we went and talked to the farmers and the farmers themselves organized meetings in various centres of Saskatchewan, 1,500 farmers in Bengough and another 2,000 in Swift Current, or thereabouts, only then would this government take any action.

(1540)

And they were sitting here on their hands with a caucus of 57 and were ignoring the problem until the small caucus of eight decided to go and deal with the problems.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And I say, Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to do the same. We're prepared to go and meet with the farmers of south-western Saskatchewan and western Saskatchewan, to address their needs, to allow them to have some input into what assistance should be given.

Here they are sitting with legislative secretaries coming out of their ears. They have 10 legislative secretaries with special privileges, and they are not even out, reaching out, addressing the problems, not even talking to the farmers on their own bases.

That is in my . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Time has expired.

Mr. Gleim: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for the opportunity to comment on this proposed motion of the

member from Humboldt. The words of this motion are not objectionable in themselves when you know what the record of this government is.

You also know, Mr. Speaker, what the record of the member opposite is. There is a record that is easily read and easily understood because there is a record filled with blank pages.

Mr. Speaker, in the face of an agricultural challenge or issue, the NDP has admirably been consistent. They have no policy, no consistency, and they have done nothing for farm families in this province, again very consistently. That compares with this government's record of hundreds of millions, and indeed billions of dollars, of direct and indirect support for farm families.

And although the words of this motion carry some meaning, the motion is so replete with hypocrisy and double-dealing that it does not warrant the support of any of the members of this Assembly.

At this very moment, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture, the Premier of this province, engaged in emergency talks with Agriculture ministers across Canada — the meeting that is taking place due directly to the actions of our Minister of Agriculture. They have concerns and that's why they are meeting.

The opposition, I remember them saying in question period, the opposition said, this is not a provincial problem, when they were in power. It's a federal problem. But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's a problem of Canada, and that includes all the provinces and the country of Canada. That meeting is to devise methods of support for the drought-stricken agricultural sector.

And this, Mr. Speaker, is of course in addition to the significant program of water assistance already announced. The program will provide the transfer of water drilling wells and other water development through the office of Saskatchewan Water Corporation, over and above the existing programs of Sask Water, along with an announcement that was made this morning by the PFRA, an additional \$10 million. I believe it's four and a half million dollars coming directly into Saskatchewan over and above what we have already. This, Mr. Speaker, is immediate assistance.

But let me say that no person, and particularly those families involved in agriculture in the south-west of the province, believe for a minute that there are instant solutions to the challenges posed by our fickle climate. And, Mr. Speaker, while it is essential to ensure that farm families are able to make it through particular drought, it is extremely important indeed to keep a long-range picture clearly focused in our minds and develop programs and plans that will not only respond to crises that arise, but that will effect the minimum these crises in our province.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition jeers at the Rafferty-Alameda project, a project that is trying to do something for agriculture in the province of Saskatchewan. We're trying to build a dam to hold water.

An Hon. Member: There's no water . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Gleim: — I know. You got to build the dam first to hold water. You can't hold water without a dam. And this is pretty hard to see how you're ever going to hold water. And I know the member from Elphinstone laughs about it, but I'm sure he knows . . . I'm sure he's built lots of dams in his day, and he knows you can't hold water without building it.

And I'll tell you another thing, the Agriculture critic from Humboldt, they call well and water development programs of Saskatchewan Water "junk." Now I'll tell you, you come down in our part of the country and you call those kind of programs junk, I'm sure you'll need a faster transportation out than what you come down with.

They denigrate every effort that is made to prevent drought, and then they try to whip up a fever debate when the drought occurs.

An Hon. Member: We'll whip up a fever all right — kick you out of office.

Mr. Gleim: — This is hypocrisy of the meanest kind, and you just . . . we just heard a little more of it from his seat over there.

An Hon. Member: That's the worst speech you've ever read.

Mr. Gleim: — We won't worry about what kind of a speech it is. We're just talking some common sense over here, and that's something maybe you have to learn about yet.

They want droughts to be brought under control in this province because they would lose another tool of fear that they have cultivated so carefully. Thrive on drought — is that your agricultural policy? Is that your solution over there, is to say, we'll thrive on drought? I have yet to hear one of them stand up and say what is the solution.

I remember last fall when we were on our farm tour, the Agriculture critic from Humboldt, we did see him once, but we never did see him come forward to the microphone and give us a solution. But we did hear him after it was all over with come up and say, they didn't do a thing for us. They didn't do a thing for us.

An Hon. Member: Can you solve the problem?

Mr. Gleim: — Solve the problem? Come and help us solve the problem. None of you guys . . . I won't repeat it; I won't use the word that I'd like to use — but you don't have it to come up here and give us a hand.

An Hon. Member: We have more solutions than you can shake a stick at.

Mr. Gleim: — Well, I'll tell you what, you better start shaking your stick because we haven't heard of any solutions yet.

I heard somebody say the other day, they asked us who the Agriculture critic was in Saskatchewan. I said, well

don't you know who the Agriculture critic is? It's the member from Humboldt. The member from Humboldt; oh, well that's fine. Have you never heard him talk about the solution to problems in agriculture? Yes, we've heard him talk, but we've never heard him come up with a solution. They always thought the member from Rosemont was the Agriculture critic because he did get up and talk about the Alameda-Rafferty dam, about doing away with it before it's even built.

So there's some of the solutions, some of the agricultural policies that the members have from across the way.

Let me ask you, Mr. Speaker, if the NDP are serious about assistance to their farm families, why did they not take the opportunity with this motion to set out what they would do? What are their solutions? Why did they not provide farm families with their plan, both to deal with this drought, with future droughts, and the farm debt problem?

They did not do this, Mr. Speaker, because they have no solution except land bank. That was their long-term solution. That's why people wonder again, like I say, who their critic was because he has never yet come up with a long-term solution — maybe even a short one wouldn't even hurt a little bit. Maybe it would even help. That is the answer to the farm debt problem of the members across. But I do not know why they think that deal, drought . . . unless they do as they say, suggest in the past and take the land out of production.

Just let me read a quote for you, **Mr. Speaker:** —

If we were far-seeing, we'd be taking land out of production.

That comes from the leader of the NDP, October 7, 1986. I guess this is what they call a farm debt solution, is take the land out of production.

An Hon. Member: Let's hear what we've done today.

Mr. Gleim: — You want to hear what we've done today. You went back to 1985. You talked there was nothing done in 1985. That was the year they helped out, they gave \$60 a tonne for . . . or \$60 per cow.

An Hon. Member: And then asked for it back.

Mr. Gleim: — They never asked for it back. They kept it. Did they get it back?

An Hon. Member: They're getting it back.

Mr. Gleim: — When are they getting it back? Then they gave \$125 grant to each animal out there — horses, cows — interest free. That's something you guys . . . that's something you people across the way never ever did do is give anything interest free. You never even . . . when the interest rates were 22 and 24 and 25 per cent, what did you do? You left them there; you waited for them to go under so you could buy it back. Man, we got control over it. That's what you like to call control.

Another thing, the \$25 an acre. It wasn't such a bad deal

when it come to take it, right. It wasn't enough as far as you people were concerned, but it was put out there for a reason. It was put out there to help, and the farmers out there appreciate it, even though you people over there didn't. But I'm pretty sure every one of you took it.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, it's not a solution to the farm families of the south-west. The people that I represent, they accept these kinds of programs. They welcome when we come out there and talk to them. We come out there, we talk to them before we put the programs into implementation. And that is something they appreciate. And Bob knows that over there.

People out there, they want to produce on their own land. They want to keep the land. They want to keep it productive, not a government that will leave them to the whims of the high interest rates, then buy back so the land could be left idle.

The NDP have told the people of Shaunavon constituency that they should be growing food on their land. Their land, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Time has expired for the member.

Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to enter this debate today, and partly because it affects an area of this province that I was born and raised in and educated in, and it's an area that I have some strong feelings about, an area right adjacent to the member who just spoke.

But I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the reason I would support this motion is because this government has been remiss in developing any long-term planning for that area of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — I think it's well known that the climatic conditions are cyclical and we do run into conditions of drought on a fairly consistent basis in the southern and western part of the province.

And I would want to say, Mr. Speaker, I'm disappointed that this government, although it's had the opportunity to develop those programs, has done nothing since they've been in power in 1982 to give any long-term planning or long-term stability for that particular area.

The minister, or the member across, talked about us whipping up a fevered debate and using the drought as a tool of fear. Well I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that those members on that side of the House have no reason to be talking about anybody being able to use the drought as a tool of fear if they had developed plans that would take the fear off of the backs of those farm families in this drought-stricken area of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — They spend a lot of time chirping on that side about this particular program and that particular program, but I want to say, Mr. Minister, what we need is an all-encompassing program that will void us of the

problems of pest and drought and flood.

But this government has been unable to develop long-term planning in anything. There's no long-term planning in terms of fiscal management of this province. There's no long-term management in terms of economic development by the people and for the people of this province. There's no long-term planning in terms of keeping farm families together, in keeping small farmers on their land. This government has been void in all of these areas, and I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I think it's a shame that this government hasn't developed the kinds of plans that would allow those types of things to happen in this province.

And I want to say, I think we're coming rapidly to a situation where this government isn't going to have the funds in order to throw, just prior to election time, at a particular problem, because they've wasted, they've squandered, they've mismanaged funds that should have been available and could have been available to develop long-term plans and long-term programs for Saskatchewan people.

(1515)

Two years ago, the federal minister, Mr. Wise, indicated that he was going to develop some long-term legislation for drought and floods and pest infestation, and we don't see that legislation now. We don't see those programs now. But what we do see is a little conference in Alberta just prior to the time when his Prime Minister is sending him out here to try and buy the farm vote just prior to an election once again.

And where has the minister of Agriculture, the Premier of this province, been? Why hasn't he been lobbying the federal minister for this long-term plan that the minister has indicated is required? If he's got the ear of the Prime Minister if this country, and if indeed that is the case, and if the Prime Minister of this country and the Premier of this province are sincere about the future of farming in Saskatchewan, surely to goodness since 1985 there could have been some new vision, some new ideas shared by this government with their federal counterparts. But we don't see that.

What we see is the federal minister jump on his jet, fly out to Alberta prior to an election, and throw a few paltry million dollars at what is a problem that is as severe as we have seen in Saskatchewan since the 1930s and beyond. And I say again, where is the long-term plan? Where is this caring, this feeling government, both from this Premier and the Prime Minister?

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, political expediency is the only thing that will create any help for Saskatchewan farmers from PC governments, both in Saskatchewan and in Ottawa.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I grew up in the Palliser Triangle. I was born and had a lot of my education in that area, and I know something of what those families are going through right now. I know the

feelings of a farmer when he wakes up in the morning to see the sun beating down on parched earth. My family farms, and my father and my mother farmed, and I know the feelings of the people in the area.

And I know that they're disappointed that this government hadn't acted, and acted in a meaningful way, in order to alleviate the problems of the drought that this government knew was there early this year. They knew there was no snow on the ground and they knew there was a potential problem, but nothing was done.

The member across wants to know what our agricultural policy is. Well I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, he'll know soon enough what the New Democrat's provincial and federal agriculture policy is. And I would want to say to you, when he has a look at it, if he can still sit as a member on that side of the floor looking at the past performance of that government with no long-term planning, then his constituents deserve full well to turf him out and turf him out as soon as they can in the next election. They knew the problems, this government knew.

In the town of Limerick where last year the citizens of that small community, very close to where I grew up, spent some \$14,000 in order to pump water from a slough to alleviate their water problem. And they know full well that they're going to have to end up going to Thomson Lake, in all probability, some 27 kilometres away in order to bring water to their community.

And this government has known that in terms of that particular community. They've had to go farther and farther away from their particular homes and their town in order to bring water to serve their needs.

And it's not new and it's not a surprise, and I want to say, Mr. Speaker, if the good Lord should send some rain down to rid us of this terrible drought problem that we're facing, that that may for a short time alleviate the problems. But I think anybody who grew up in that area and knows the area, will understand that it's bound to happen again.

And the same was true in 1985 — the same was true in that time that this government knew that there would be future problems in terms of drought. But no long-term planning, no vision, and I would want to say, Mr. Speaker, no compassion.

My colleague from Prince Albert says it appears that there is no long-term commitment. And I would agree with him because I say, if it doesn't suit the political needs of the Progressive Conservative Party, it doesn't happen.

And I say to you there's going to be droughts again just as sure the sun comes up in the morning and goes down in the evening. We're going to be facing more drought conditions and more drought problems and there has to be long-term planning in order to rid ourselves of unnecessary hardship that I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that this government has the foresight or the commitment in order to make that happen.

I want to say that the people of that area deserve better

government that you've given, that this government has given, and that *ad hoc* measures aren't what is required in order to give some security to that particular area. It'll happen again, as I've said before, as surely as the sun comes up in the morning. And I would suggest that they deserve better than what the government has delivered.

I'd like to as well indicate, Mr. Speaker, that this government has not got the ear of the Prime Minister of this country — has not, and I'll repeat it again — unless it's just prior to an election, Mr. Deputy Premier.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, your time has expired.

Mr. Petersen: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It would be very easy to be facetious and try to make this a comedy routine and trade insults back and forth across the floor, but, Mr. Speaker, we're talking about a fairly serious situation.

As the member who just spoke, we have farm families, we have families out there, we have towns, communities, that are suffering in a drought. But for the opposition to say that this province and this government is doing nothing, is totally erroneous — totally erroneous. No one can make it rain. God will decide when it rains — fair enough. The NDP cannot decide when it rains; we will not decide when it rains. But this government has acted and will continue to do so.

In case you haven't been reading the papers, or you haven't checked out what's happening in the province, especially in rural Saskatchewan, you may not have noticed that oh, I think, on May 10, I believe it was, the Minister of the Environment made an announcement that the Saskatchewan Water Corporation would be putting another eight and a half million dollars into drought aid to help the very communities that the member just spoke about. And that's going to do a lot to alleviate the situation. It's not going to solve it, it's going to help to alleviate it. They're going to be able to dig wells; they're going to be able to go into other areas for water.

This morning the federal Minister of Agriculture announced, I believe it was just over \$12 million to increase PFRA's commitment to bring them up to what we had, as a province, put in place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I find that fairly significant — \$20 million for water, water development, for the very communities and the people that the members have been speaking about.

An Hon. Member: Is that long-term help?

Mr. Petersen: — Yes, long-term help. It won't be something that's just there for the moment. Those wells will last for years and years. And in the past years, Mr. Speaker, Sask Water Corporation has been providing assistance to those communities to further increase their water supplies. Unfortunately, the water tables are going down, they're getting lower, we're going to have to dig deeper. But we're providing assistance, again, long-term assistance.

Mr. Speaker, we are asked to provide programs that are meaningful. Well, Mr. Speaker, \$1.2 billion out to the people of Saskatchewan seems to me fairly meaningful, that in a time when they needed it, on the recommendation of such organizations as the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities), Sask Wheat Pool, the National Farmers Union, farmers across Saskatchewan, and so on and so forth.

When it comes time to pay back the loan, which was originally a three-year loan, we again listened to the people of Saskatchewan and extended it to 10 years. And there were some who said, oh, you should forgive it, you should give it back, you should just forget about it. But the problem that we have, Mr. Speaker, is it's \$1.2 billion. It was put out as a loan. We extended it to 10 years, made every opportunity for people to be able to pay it back. That's long-term commitment, Mr. Speaker.

Crop insurance: we have introduced forage insurance in crop insurance, individual coverage for farmers in crop insurance. And I would say, Mr. Speaker, that over the years the former member for Shaunavon, now the member for Elphinstone, may even have collected on crop insurance. And if any of the other members have ever been farmers, they, too, might have benefitted from crop insurance. They may even have benefitted since we've made improvements to the program, Mr. Speaker. Again, long-term commitment. And I'd invite members opposite, if they have collected on it, to come clean and tell us how much.

Let's take a look at PFRA federal-provincial commitments, Mr. Speaker. We have conservation programs that are being funded federally in conjunction with our own programs here, and that comes from a Conservative government federally, a Tory government. Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker? The members opposite stand up and sanctimoniously go on about how Tories are terrible and all the rest of it. But, Mr. Speaker, money is being provided. Conservation is being developed.

The national scene: we've developed a national ag strategy that is helping to bring better understanding of what causes our cyclical downturns on the economic side. It isn't just weather that hits us. It's also world economic condition that hit us, and hit us very hard.

Subsidies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is what one of the main problems is. What we have, Mr. Speaker, is too many countries trying to subsidize their farmers for the purposes of controlling markets, and providing for their own particular situations, Mr. Speaker. And when you get to markets like the European Economic Community and the United States subsidizing their farmers, we in Canada, who are typically exporters of 80 per cent of our product, suffer.

Our Premier has been trying to do his best to bring that to the attention of the world. Our Prime Minister just recently was in Europe again trying to bring into focus that very, very difficult question of farm subsidies. When you take a look at that situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you find that between the droughts, the frosts, the floods the farmers are subject to, couple that with the high subsidy wars that are going on in the world, our farmers are in

difficulty.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is why, when we were asked to provide 6 per cent money, we did. That, Mr. Speaker, is why, when we were asked to provide 8 per cent money for young farmers to start farming, we did, at a time when interest rates were 16, 18, 20 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, in Alberta for years and years, feeder associations were the order of the day, cattle feeding associations. A group of people would get together, form an association, put their cattle in, feed them out. They could get particular benefits from the government in low-interest loans, long-term loans, so on and so forth. But it wasn't allowed in Saskatchewan. Heaven forbid! The former administration wouldn't allow it.

But we put those in. And today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are feeding out more cattle in this province than ever before. That provides not only jobs for our people in the processing industry, but also provides another market for the grain that we produce.

We talk about vision. Let's talk about vision. Vision, Mr. Speaker. The opposition talks about vision. At a time when we have a drought on our hands, they talk about vision and then they put their blinkers on and say, don't build Shand, don't build Rafferty. I mean, Mr. Speaker, does it make any sense?

We're trying to put together a situation where you will have reservoirs of water, Mr. Deputy Speaker — water, which is what you need when you have a drought. It is called drought proofing.

But the opposition says, don't do it; don't do it. And they talk about vision. I mean, they are deliberately going blind, which is no surprise to anyone. They are deliberately ignoring those things which can help in future droughts in future years. And they talk about long-term strategy.

Mr. Speaker, it boggles the mind how a party, how a group of people can be so insensitive to future needs that they will not agree to building these types of projects which will help to drought proof the province. I imagine they would have been against building the Diefenbaker Lake system. I imagine they'd have been against that because . . . well I'm not too sure why, but they probably would have been.

(1530)

I can't imagine anyone not seeing the benefits that that particular project has provided for the province to date — water, drought proofing, recreation.

And then when we talk about Shand and Rafferty they say, don't do it. They actively, actively work against it. It's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, just unbelievable.

And then, Mr. Speaker, the farm debt situation which has been accentuated by the droughts that we've had, and the problems with foreign subsidies, grain markets going down. We bring in protection for the farm families in Saskatchewan and the member for Humboldt calls the

protection that we introduce, "junk." Junk. Home quarter protection — his very words were, it's a bunch of junk.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you have an ag critic like that, I mean what can you expect from a group of people. When you've put in protective legislation designed to help farm families, designed to provide a certain amount of security for those people who are sitting there not knowing, not knowing what their future might be, when you have the compassion and the foresight to do that and you have a member of the NDP call it junk — I am really upset, Mr. Speaker. I'm really upset.

And I hope all of Saskatchewan heard him say it. And if they didn't, I'm sure we'll go out and tell them because they have the right to know that the ag critic from Humboldt, the member from Humboldt, calls farm protection legislation junk.

Now that just shows you the calibre of people they have over there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it boggles the mind. Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we talk about vision . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's with appreciation that I stand and speak on this motion that is put by the member from Humboldt and seconded by the member from Quill Lakes, because for the past month this legislature from the opposition benches has been pushing this government almost daily to try to get some action on the drought which is taking place in southern and western Saskatchewan. As early as March 31 the issue was raised in this Assembly, and it's ironic that we are still pushing this government to try to bring in a program that would deal with the drought and the problem facing farmers as a result of the drought.

Now the member from Kelvington-Wadena, as he speaks about the issue of drought, raises only one program that has meant anything to the farmers of Saskatchewan, and that is the crop insurance program, a program brought in by a New Democratic government back in the 1970s. The only program that he brags about having any impact during a drought situation, is the crop insurance program. And I agree with him. That is the only program that will have meaning this year.

And he talks about the water. And I have here the press release that come out of Calgary after a month of negotiating, and it talks about digging dug-outs. Well the farmers down in the south-west will wonder about a government that after studying for a month the problem of the drought, would come forward with millions of dollars to dig dug-outs. Because digging dug-outs in May and June of this year, in 1988, doesn't seem to be dealing with the drought program.

And spending millions of dollars on pipes and pumps when there is no water to pump doesn't seem to make a lot of sense either. And when it comes to wells for farmers, the vast majority of farmers already have wells. The problem is they have no feed for the cattle. They have no feed for the cattle, and no money to buy feed.

Now what this party is pushing for from the opposition benches, is a program that would put in place a subsidy program directly to the farmers, and pay them between 50 and \$90 per head for each cow or each livestock head on the farm that would allow them to go out and purchase the feed that it would take in order to keep the cattle herd in place.

Well the member from Kelvington-Wadena, when he talks about all of the programs and the tours that his members have taken to try to deal with this program since 1985, should be putting that money into helping farmers. Because after years of travelling around the province on the debt issue, they come up with Bill 37 which has not 1 cent of money for farmers, not 1 cent to deal with the debt problem.

An Hon. Member: Do you call it junk?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I call it junk, total junk. I agree with . . .

An Hon. Member: You're calling it junk?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I agree with it. It's total junk. There's nothing in it for farmers.

An Hon. Member: Do you have him on record?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — You have it on record.

An Hon. Member: Thank you.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — And here's Bill 37, which cost thousands of dollars to tour the Tory caucus around, should have been paid for by the Tory Party that comes up with a Bill that is junk. It has nothing more in it than what was there before.

All it does is open up more land to foreign ownership; it increases to 320 acres the amount of land that foreign investors can pick up in this province. That's all that it changes. There's nothing new in this Bill, except to allow corporations ownership where they weren't allowed to buy up that kind of parcel of land. That's the big change that there is in this Bill.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what about the problem facing farmers, of drought and debt? What is there in the Bill? There's nothing. What is there in the announcement that would deal with the urgency of the problem that farmers have, the \$8 million that has been announced. There's not one thing here — pumping water from where? Where are they going to pump the water from? Where are they going to . . .

An Hon. Member: Rafferty.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Why would they dig a dug-out in June of 1988 when there's no water around? The members say Rafferty, the billion dollars they're spending on Rafferty is going to help farmers this year.

If it had been in place this year, there wouldn't be enough water to cool the generator, let alone have anything for

farmers, and everyone knows that. Their own investigation and their own research shows that this year there would have not been enough water to cool the generator, let alone have any water to irrigate or pump onto any farm land.

So the member from Kelvington-Wadena, when he talks about Rafferty, simply is either trying to mislead the farmers of this province or he's totally ill-informed — one or the other. I think he's trying to mislead the farmers because there is no water.

There was no run-off in the area, and if Rafferty had been in place this year, it would have proven to be the boondoggle that we know it will be because there isn't the quantity of water to both cool the generator and provide irrigation water. There just isn't, and their own studies prove that. And that's why they're very leery about talking about it in any detail and bringing forward the reports.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we look at this government's record in rural Saskatchewan, it is one of ripping and tearing at the rural fabric. It's not only the fact that they haven't dealt with the debt problem and the drought problem, but if you look at the farm families who have been devastated by program cuts like the dental program and the drug program, we see that farmers who are facing disaster economically are also being told that no longer do they need social programs like family income, where the money has been cut. The dental program which has been slashed and cut away where there's no rural dental program in existence any more. The drug plan, which has meant hundreds of dollars for some farm families, increased in what they have to pay for medical bills.

I say to you that this government is a heartless government when it comes to farm families, and it's not as if they haven't had time to develop programs. They put out a billion dollars to farmers in loans at 6 per cent. That's when things were bad. Then at 18 months later or two years later when things were even worse, they said, we want the money back, and not only want the money back, but we want to increase the interest rate by 50 per cent, from 6 per cent to nine and three-quarters.

Now this is an interesting concept where there was such a disaster in 1985 or 1986, where they lent out a billion dollars at 6 per cent. It was such a disaster when wheat was 3.50 that they had to lend out 1.2 billion. Such a disaster. Then in 1988 after the election, they say when the price of wheat has dropped to 2.50, we now want the money back, and we don't only want the money back at 6 per cent, we're going to increase the interest rate by 50 or 55 per cent. That's after they studied the problem.

They drove around the province at taxpayers' expense and they said here is the solution, here is the solution to the problem facing farmers. We've loaned the money out at 6 per cent; we loaned it out at 6 per cent when wheat was 3.50; now when wheat is 2.50, we want it back at nine and three-quarters.

Well I can see why the people of the province in rural Saskatchewan are rejecting the program of this

Conservative government. And I know that when the announcements come out of the Calgary meeting, we will be disappointed once again because we know full well that the commitment and promises that were made to rural Saskatchewan, both in 1982 and 1986, will have been broken again.

But I want to go back to the problem of debt and the disaster that that is creating for farmers in rural Saskatchewan. We have seen since 1982 an exodus from the farms such as hasn't been seen since the 1930s. The number of young and starting farmers going broke with this Conservative government is that record of proportions.

All you have to do is drive into any small rural town and you will see businesses closed up — record numbers, implement dealers. In fact, in the town of Shaunavon, I believe there are now three implement dealers less than there were in 1982 when this Conservative government was first elected with a promise that they would make things better is the province of Saskatchewan.

And I say, if you drive to the rural areas and check out other businesses, manufacturing, like Friggstad Manufacturing, which was flourishing in the Shaunavon constituency down in Frontier — bankrupt because the government pulled the rug out from underneath of them when things got tough.

So I say to you that when it comes to small business people and farmers in rural Saskatchewan, they're catching on to these birds and catching on very quickly. And that's why we would challenge these people that if they've got rural members who intend to resign, and we know that there are some of them that aren't intending to run in the next election, we challenge them to do it early, call early by-elections so we can test the water in rural Saskatchewan and check whether or not your programs are making economic or political sense, because I believe they're not.

So we see the Deputy Premier talking from his seat about the great, great job that this government has done. And he brags about Rafferty. This great boondoggle . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. The member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand here and speak on behalf of a motion that I'm not sure that has its worthiness to be spoken of in this Chamber this afternoon. But nevertheless, we have now heard from a number of the urban farmers that the NDP seem to have in this legislature.

I want to say that we just have heard, Mr. Speaker, from the member from Elphinstone, the former member from Shaunavon, and I just want to inform the people of Saskatchewan and this Assembly that the people of Shaunavon remember just exactly how much the NDP did for the farming and the rural parts of this province when the member tried running in Shaunavon again against my colleague on this side of the House, the now member from Shaunavon, and he found out how quickly

a member can be defeated by not looking after the particular problems throughout this province, and especially agriculture — and agriculture as the priority of this province. I want to say that he's now sheltered himself in Elphinstone, in the constituency of Elphinstone, because it was quite a drought for him in Shaunavon as far as the votes went.

I want to get on to the particular issue at hand here, Mr. Speaker. I want to say to you that as the member from Elphinstone was speaking, he had mentioned that it was that side of the house that was forcing this government to do many things for the farmers in this province. Well, Mr. Speaker, as I stand here and speak, and as . . . right to this particular moment, I have as of yet heard from the members opposite, the NDP, that said they're so concerned and with the new ideas and everything, I have not ever heard them bring an idea into this Assembly and publicly put it forth and lay out any type of a platform to this government in which they would help the farming community, let alone small business or anyone else in this province.

(1545)

I challenge those members opposite, the NDP, Mr. Speaker, to come out with those programs to help the farming community and the droughts in the bad economic time. But they haven't. They haven't. They stand there and they get up as a bunch of righteous people and say that . . . and condemn everything that we have been possibly doing to ease the burden for farmers. And yet, no. They stand there and criticize, and that basically all we get is just a whole bunch of nothing.

When we talk about . . . when they talk about us, the government, not having any money available to farmers. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think, and as the member from Elphinstone says, he challenges anybody on this side of the House in their ridings. Well I do take that seriously, and I want the member from Elphinstone, our urban farmer, our urban cowboy, to come into the riding of Cut Knife-Lloydminster, and I will challenge him today and I will challenge him in a public debate out in my riding, that what he has indicated here of this government's record for agriculture, I will challenge our record to his record publicly any day. And I invite that member to come out to my riding and take me up on this challenge.

And he says, Mr. Speaker, that he challenges any one of us to resign from our seats and test the water, and everything else like this. Well I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, then I challenge the member from Humboldt, I challenge the member from Quill Lakes and I challenge . . . I guess that is the only kind of rural ridings they do have. But I would like to challenge those two members to resign.

And yes, we will test the waters, Mr. Speaker. We will test the waters just to see who will be back in. And I guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, that rural Saskatchewan will put those two members on this side of the House, and they will not return it to the NDP.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — They will not return those ridings to the NDP. Mr. Speaker, when I think of the farming community I represent, I want to say that my farmers out in my particular riding are totally gratified to the amount of help that this government has shown to agriculture. I want to say that this should not be a game of politics when we're actually talking about agriculture and drought.

I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that when we see this kind of dilemma in our society, that no one should be trying to get any real benefit out of politics from such a bad turn of events. And I think that all parties, all parties in this legislature should work together and acknowledge a good thing when a good thing's done. And we all know that we should be doing so much more. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a limitation to the amount of dollars that are available to a government.

And a government does not just have one particular department; it has many departments where those dollars have to be divided. If we took from Education or Social Services or from all different realms of the coffers, took those dollars and put it just into Agriculture, well everybody else would be suffering. So we have to try to operate within means so that to divide it equally and try to appease everyone and not have various people having to struggle needlessly.

I think we are seeing, Mr. Speaker, some change within the farming communities. I know, like my farmers out there have indicated to me that we have . . .

An Hon. Member: My farmers! They aren't your farmers; the farmers in the constituency I represent. My farmers!

Mr. Hopfner: — And the member from Quill Lakes is spilling out again, you know. He's the member from . . . that I challenge for him to resign and we'll test the waters in his riding.

But getting back on the point, Mr. Speaker, my farmers, my farmers would and do appreciate what we've done, and what I am saying to you is that they are saying to me that as long as we can maintain the type of level that we are showing, that they will and should be able to survive this dilemma.

When the members talk about building and drought and everything else, and they talk about water, well that's what our government is trying to do, Mr. Speaker — we're trying to build up a water supply in this province, which they're against. The member from Eliphanstone (Elphinstone), our urban climber, he was talking about where are they going to . . .

An Hon. Member: Eliphanstone!

Mr. Hopfner: — Pardon me.

But they were going to . . . He was wondering where they were going to . . . Sorry about that. They were wondering where they were going to be pumping the water from and stuff like this. But, you know, we have to build up these various different water areas so that there is this water

supply and pumping availability.

But I think basically, Mr. Speaker, the people in Saskatchewan . . . I must have hit a funny-bone with you, Mr. Speaker. But anyway I'm sure that . . . anyway with this kind of investment in this province and with us as a government at least showing that type of respect for such a major industry such as farming, that we can almost rest assured that our farming community is much more, much more at ease than it had been back into 1980 . . . 1979, 1980, 1981, where I can remember the farmers were really hollering for a tremendous amount of help when interest rates hit 24, 25 . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Time has expired.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That certainly was an entertaining intervention by the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster. I would like to point out to him however, though, that only elephants in the constituency of Regina Elphinstone are those that rolled over the Tory candidate on May 4 by-election in that constituency.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Anguish: — In terms of testing the water, the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd invited some of the members on this side to go out and test the waters in his constituency, and I want to assure him that we have tested the waters in his constituency. Many members on this side of the House have been in Cut Knife-Lloydminster riding, talking to people, listening to their concerns. And one of the things we found when we were out there, Mr. Speaker, is a report card done by Jeff Harder from one of the local newspapers. There's a big title. It says: . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Time has expired.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — By leave of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we will go to second readings, Bill No. 5.

Leave granted.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 5 — An Act to declare A Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured in the Course of their Employment

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Bill was originally introduced to this Assembly on April 26 and at that time was referred to the Non-Controversial Bills Committee by unanimous consent.

However, the proposed Bill, as currently printed, states the coming into force as April 28, 1988. Because the committee did not have opportunity to consider the Bill by that date, and because the committee does not have the authority to amend the Bill, it referred the Bill back to this Assembly.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that the committee did not consider the Bill controversial in the normal sense of the meaning of that word, but found itself unable to recommend Bill 5 to the Assembly within the rules which

apply to the Non-Controversial Bills Committee.

Subsequently, the Bill is before us now, Mr. Speaker, and given the opportunity, I will be moving an amendment in committee of the whole to permit the coming into force of the Bill to be retroactive to April 28, 1988.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the government's co-operation to deal with this non-partisan private member's Bill, to put in Saskatchewan law the official declaration of April 28th of each year as a day of mourning for workers killed or injured in the course of their employment.

It is the Saskatchewan tradition to recognize the contributions of our citizens who have been a part of building our great province. We frequently and appropriately recognize the efforts and accomplishments of public leaders. This Bill gives official recognition to the sacrifices made by thousands who quietly go about doing their jobs, unsung heroes if you like.

In no small measure, working men and women are an intricate part of the process of building Saskatchewan, of making this province an excellent place to live, to raise a family, to learn, to find opportunities of many kinds, and to retire. Working men and women are truly the backbone of our economy and our society.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, many of our citizens are injured in the process of making their living and building our province. Even more unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, every year some working men and women suffer the ultimate sacrifice in the course of their labours. It is the harsh reality that some of our citizens die as the result of work place accidents.

In Saskatchewan the Workers' Compensation Board settled claims for 29 workers killed on the job in 1986. Their average age was 37, and in addition to leaving their families with a very personal loss, there was a potential earnings loss to age 65 of some \$20 million. Twenty-seven more were killed on the job in 1987.

In 1986 the Workers' Compensation Board settled 598 claims for permanent disability, and over 470,000 days were lost because of injuries. In 1987 the board settled another 132 claims for permanent disability with a loss of some 408,000 days due to injury.

Mr. Speaker, in the 12 years from 1976 to 1987, Saskatchewan lost 492 workers; 492 killed on the job, with another 6,913 experiencing a permanent disability.

Implicit in the passing of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is a call for the Government of Saskatchewan to rededicate itself, to recommit itself to the improvement of occupational health and safety standards both by statute and by enforcement.

We in this House know that we will likely never see a year without workers experiencing disabling injuries or suffering a single fatality on the job. But surely it is the objective of an injury-free work place that must be our goal.

Mr. Speaker, in a spirit of co-operation, I recognize that

April 28 was proclaimed a day of mourning in recognition of workers killed, injured or disabled on the job, last year by the Minister of Labour, and this year by the Premier.

I call on all members to support this Bill, making April 27 an officially recognized day of mourning, as a matter of statute and as a symbol of ongoing commitment to a safer work place for the backbone of our province, the working men and women of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 5, an Act to declare a Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured in the Course of their Employment, be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

(1600)

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, just a couple of brief words, recognizing that the Bill is non-controversial and ought not to generate a great deal of debate, and just to support the member in his desire to have this date set aside in statute, there'll be no resistance at all from this side of the House.

Unfortunately our minister responsible, I know, would have wanted to, in the ordinary course, offer some comments at this stage. He's also chairman of leg(islative) review committee, which is sitting at this very moment. So I just want to point out to all hon. member that he, in all likelihood, during the committee stage would put his remarks on the record, Mr. Speaker.

So I would urge all members to support this Bill.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and, by leave of the Assembly, referred to a Committee of the Whole later this day.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — With leave of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I move we go on to Government Orders, Committee of Finance.

Leave granted.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 51

Item 1

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a few brief questions to the minister respecting one of the employees of the corporation, a particular Shirley Hammond. And I wonder if you can confirm that Shirley Hammond is an employee of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I believe that you're talking about Sheila Hammond. We don't have a Shirley Hammond. So rather than get involved in a bunch of

nonsense, I'll tell you that we do have a Sheila Hammond and she's the assistant director of public affairs. That's about all I can tell you.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Can you tell the House when this Sheila Hammond — and I must apologize, I misread my notes here — when this Sheila Hammond started work with the corporation and what paper qualifications she might have had to bring to her job?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — She was the manager of the communications secretariat at June 1, 1984. And her qualifications are a two-year paralegal course, including real estate law; four years experience in the private sector as paralegal; three years experience with trust company mortgages; economics 100, business law and administration at the University of Regina; and appraisal 100 through the Appraisal Institute of Canada — all real estate courses that connect her very well with Sask Housing.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — But she's employed in the area of public affairs. Is there anything in her background that to your mind would particularly suit her for a job in public affairs, as say distinct from other aspects of the corporation where her work, her background in legal work or background in financial institutions might stand her in good stead?

Just what particular qualifications does she have in the area of public affairs that you would see fit to have her appointed as assistant director of public affairs?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well certainly in her communications secretariat she established a detailed program for various sod-turning ceremonies; she arranged housing authority appointments and related activities; she arranged official openings, and there was no question that that's all public affairs related. And I would suspect that as a result of that she became pretty familiar with public affairs section of the corporation, and coupled with the extensive qualifications of time that she spent at school, she's obviously an intelligent young woman.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Can you just tell the House what her salary is, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Her present salary is \$3,016 per month.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I wonder, Mr. Minister, if Ms. Hammond has taken any leave this year for vacation purpose.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I understand that she did take a little bit of time off recently, for which she was not paid.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — This was unpaid leave then. I have your assurance on that point — that she was not paid while she was away, reputedly in Hawaii?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I don't know where she was, but I have been informed that she took some time off recently, a week or two, and that she has not been paid for that.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I just want to back up for a minute in

terms of qualifications. Is this the same Sheila Hammond who's a former president of the Progressive Conservative Party women's federation or women's group? Perhaps you can tell me what the exact organization is.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Most certainly. I responded to that last year.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Minister, would you mind responding again this year?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I gave you the same response. I said, certainly it's the same lady. I responded to that last year.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — The PC woman's federation, is that the name of the group?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I don't know what the name of the organization was, Mr. Chairman. It was the PC Saskatchewan women's association. I don't believe that that particular association is in existence any more.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Obviously, that last comment Mr. Minister . . . I won't speculate on the reasons why its not in existence any more, but has Miss Hammond applied for educational leave, and if so, can you tell me the terms and the conditions of the educational leave?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, she is on education leave. That was approved September 1, 1987. It's in accordance with the education policy approved by treasury board in 1974 and administered by the Public Service Commission since 1981 — all the same program.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And can you tell us for how long this educational leave will go on, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I understand that that particular program provides for a maximum length of time, subject to the employee receiving passing grades and the course in which they're enrolled. She's enrolled in the second year of pre-journalism and communications, and her present salary, in accordance with the policy, is 80 per cent of her normal salary, which amounts to \$2,412.80 per month.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Let me just get this straight now. She's in the second year of her program. Have you already paid for the first year of the program? Is there going to be third year of the program? Could you just be a little bit more forthcoming here about the length of time that you've committed for her educational leave? Can you please tell us that?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I've been informed that she had taken some classes prior to her approval for education leave under the existing Public Service Commission program, and that we began her education leave September 1, 1987, and it was for six semesters, to expire May 1, 1990, subject always to her receiving passing grades. And that's within the normal policy dictated by the Public Service Commission.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well, Minister, I tell you that might be the policy of the Public Service Commission, but I don't think that anybody in this House, I don't think that

anyone in this House can rightfully recollect someone who's moved into a corporation such as this for no other particular reason than their political allegiance, then being sent to school for three years.

I just want to back up for a minute here and make it clear for the people of Saskatchewan that this particular person is the president of some PC federation, who's been employed by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation in the area of communications first, and then public affairs.

And it would appear from the qualifications that you've listed that she was not particularly well qualified for any of those jobs. That's not to say that she wasn't qualified for other jobs that she's trained for in the past, such as for a paralegal or work in financial institutions, but was not particularly well qualified in the area of communications or public affairs. And to top it all off, to top it off you've now sent her to school to study journalism which might make her qualified for the kind of job that she's holding now.

(1615)

What we see here, Mr. Minister, is a double standard, the likes of which we don't see very often in Saskatchewan except under your government, where you're taking a person with very little job experience in a corporation and saying, well we'll send you to school for three years. I'd like to know who else in the Public Service Commission is getting that kind of help from your government.

How in your right mind — how in your right mind can you justify taking a political hack, sending her to school for three years at 80 per cent of her salary, while there's all kinds of young people in this province who want to go to school, who are having a tough time to get loans and bursaries to pursue a university education?

What we see here is a government that is willing to favour its political hacks and send them to school at 80 per cent of a very generous salary, and on the other hand doesn't have the kind of money for university students in post-secondary education. There's a horrible double standard, Mr. Minister, and especially so because this is not the kind of treatment that would be afforded to anyone else in the public service.

Can you tell me one other instance, Mr. Minister, one other instance of a member of the public service who after three or four years of employment has been so well favoured by the government that they would support a request to send that person to university for three years at 80 per cent of their salary? Name me one other person who has been so favoured by your government.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I've been informed that this policy has been in place, Mr. Chairman, for a long time. And when I say a long time, I don't know, maybe 20 or 30 years — certainly under the regime of the NDP. It's a Public Service Commission policy available to the employees, and that it's used from time to time. So if it was used in this occasion, I have nothing to hide or fear or be ashamed of. We just used an existing policy that's been in place for a long time.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well I tell you, Mr. Minister, one person could take a policy, and with common sense and some prudence, make the policy seem fair and work effectively. But then there's others, like yourself, who seem to throw caution, common sense, and prudence right out the window if it comes to favouring your friends. And that's the case here.

I ask you again: give me an instance of one person in the Public Service Commission who has been so well favoured by the government, so well favoured, that after three or four years of employment that the government would deign to pay for that person to go to school for three years at 80 per cent of their salary. Give me an instance.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, he's talking estimates that are not mine, but I will take this undertaking. When the Public Service Commission is discussed in these estimates, I will ensure that the minister has a long list of the way that this education has been used prior to 1981. And if you prefer to drag the employees' names through this Assembly, we will. And we will have a list of, I don't know how long, if you prefer that.

It's not my department; I can't respond. But I will undertake to talk to my colleague and research that information prior to 1981 to establish the fact that his is a normal leave that has been in place for a long, long time. And we will come up with the instances that you're looking for, and they'll be under the NDP administration.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well, Mr. Minister, we've done the Public Service Commission estimates, but no doubt about it, that we will have further opportunity in the future to ask questions about this particular case.

Whatever the policy might be, it's clear to the people of Saskatchewan that this is a gross abuse of your responsibilities as a minister, that you would take someone who has been hired for no other reason than because of their political connections, and then send that person to school for three years at 80 per cent of their salary at a time that there is hundreds, if not thousands, of young people in Saskatchewan that are interested in furthering their education but can't get the kind of help that they need from government to be able to do that. Mr. Minister, it speaks of a double standard that is simply gross in this province and I have no further questions of you, Mr. Minister, and will turn it over to my colleague.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I've got a couple of questions to the minister on a similar vein in terms of employment practices by the corporation.

I want to refer the minister to an employee who took maternity leave and who resigned her job with the Sask Housing Corporation, an employee whose name was Jenny (Genevieve) Wakelam, and who lives in my constituency who had many years of service at the Sask Housing Corporation.

A temporary job came open for which Ms. Wakelam was well qualified through her years of employment. I know Mr. Boys is sitting here today and I requested from Mr.

Boys, earlier on, the reason why Ms. Wakelam was not hired on the temporary job when in fact an employee who was hired had no experience with the corporation, did not possess, according to the employees there, did not possess even the clerical skills necessary to carry out the job — I requested from Mr. Boys a resume of the employee who had been hired — when Ms. Wakelam obviously had her qualifications.

And I wonder if you would give to us today the qualifications of the employee who was hired in the place of Ms. Wakelam? And why is it that people who work at Sask Housing can't understand why people with Ms. Wakelam's qualifications, who are obviously fit for the job, aren't being hired when people from the street are. Is that an example of your hiring efficiency and the kind of employee-relations practice that you're undertaking as . . .

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I have been informed that seven of the last 10 management positions in the corporation have been filled internally, Mr. Chairman, and that everybody enjoys the hiring practice at the corporation, the union included. We have no problems with it.

With regard to the lady to which you refer, I've been informed that the applicant was interviewed in the same manner as other candidates, and that the former employee was not successful as the corporation had offered the position to another candidate that they considered to be more qualified. And not being satisfied with that response, this lady chose to go through an area of various people to appeal the hiring, the position, the way it was completed. And that's about all I can tell you. I don't know her.

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Chairman, that's not what I asked the minister. I want the minister, and as I asked it and requested it from officials of the housing corporation before, I want the resume of the person who was hired, and I want the kind of experience sheet, because I was not told the truth by your officials in the Sask Housing Corporation when I inquired. And I intend to . . . when a member of the Legislative Assembly inquires from officials, they expect to be told the truth about what's going on in terms of what's happening within a public function. And I'm raising this issue here because I am saying to you, sir, that what you are being told by your officials and what you have just said, is not true.

Now is it not true that in fact that the employee who was refused the job, who was turned down the job, took this case to the Human Rights Commission because of discrimination, or alleged discrimination on the parts of officials at the Sask Housing Corporation?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I've been informed that the Ombudsman looked into that and declared that the corporation hiring practices were fine. I don't believe that this Assembly should be in the position to give out resumes of people that apply or are hired at any corporation.

And as far as her appeal to the human rights is concerned, we haven't heard back from human rights anything in particular wrong with the hiring practice that was

involved. And for the member to tantamount to calling my officials a liar when he said that he didn't get truthful information, I'm sorry to hear him accuse the officials of being that. They are long-time faithful employees of the corporation.

I have been informed that they supplied the member with exactly the truth to the point that they feel that they should supply certain information from the personal resumes of people that are applying, and I suppose that's all I can tell you.

Mr. Lyons: — Well, Mr. Minister, I want to make it clear that, in my opinion, I was not supplied with the truth the various times I contacted your officials at the housing corporation. I was supplied with different stories and different reasons, and to me that is not being supplied with the truth.

However, I'm in no position at this time to do anything about that, other than to raise the case of Ms. Wakelam and her, what I judge to be unfair, treatment in the hand of the legislature. And I'm glad that in fact you did acknowledge the fact that she felt her hiring practices were such that she had to take this on to the Ombudsman.

I ask you again to ask your officials to supply you with the resume of the employee who was hired during that particular job search, so that I may indeed judge for myself, and that all members of the legislature may judge for themselves, the qualifications and the hiring practices. I would ask you to table that, if you wouldn't mind.

And having said that, I would then turn this questioning over to my colleague from Saskatoon Centre.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, my officials inform me that the truth was told. I still say that it is not the job of this Assembly to scrutinize the resume of applicants for various positions in this government. The member from Regina Rosemont named Mr. Boys in this Assembly. I suppose the only advice I can share with the member from Rosemont is, if he would care to slander Mr. Boys and name him publicly outside of this Assembly, he would be welcome to do that.

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I want to question you about the housing corporation in my role as critic for senior's issues.

I want first of all, to recognize that I consider housing to be an essential need for all Canadians. Good housing is particularly important, and it's particularly important to older people, many of whom in this province are older women who have been widowed and who need to look at different housing arrangements in the course of their lives.

And as I've been going around the province, one of the areas that people have asked me about, with some questions of deep concern, is the development of what your government is calling "enriched housing." We see signs around the province saying "Enriched Senior Citizens' Projects," and much made of this enriched housing.

And I've got the annual report for 1987, in which you have a page on enriched housing, and I understand that enriched housing is a concept — you used capital letters for it so it seems to be something on its own. You say in this report, the annual report for '87, that:

Enriched Housing was developed, through consultations with senior citizens, to provide housing in an environment that helps keep seniors independent.

Now one of the questions I have, that you might want to elaborate on, is the consultations you had with seniors regarding enriched housing because of the kind of comments I'm getting from the seniors about this enriched housing.

You say in the annual report:

The unique design concept (of enriched housing) maximizes independent living through self contained units, arranged along a common corridor.

Now somehow that is supposed to be a unique design, but really what that describes is an ordinary apartment building where people have units that are doors opening onto a central corridor.

An important feature of these (enriched housing) is the lounge where residents can gather for entertainment and companionship.

Now I've been in some of these enriched housing projects, and the lounge is basically an enlarged lobby — a very common development, not only in housing authority apartments, but also in apartment buildings per se.

(1630)

And you say that:

This common area is utilized for a number of volunteer community services and programs.

Well it can be used for meetings of all sorts of things. But in the enriched housing that I've been in, the enriched housing built under your government, there's been no kitchen facilities connected with this common room, such as are available in the housing authority buildings in the Saskatoon Centre constituency, which I represent, that were built under the New Democratic Party, where seniors have access to kitchen facilities, to lounge areas, to recreations facilities, to common-rooms on each floor of an apartment. In the new buildings which you call enriched housing these facilities are not available.

You say in your report that services found in enriched housing projects vary from community to community based on local need commitment and choice by the residents. And I wonder about the kind of choice by the residents of what they're going to get when they get into a facility; how you see that as choice by the residents as to what goes on there. I'm curious about that.

I believe . . . and I have some other questions to ask you about enriched housing, but I will give you the opportunity to reply to my initial concerns. I think what you're calling enriched housing is basically the kind of housing that was built under the New Democratic government under the housing authority units that we have in Saskatoon. And actually what you are calling enriched housing has less facilities than what we built in the past. So would you like to address this issue for the seniors of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, we . . . nobody knows that we had the seniors' task force in 1984, and since that time not only has the enriched housing had total self-contained suites so that our seniors can enjoy an independent style, and as a result they've got, of course their kitchens, total kitchens in their apartment. But in all of our newer larger structures that are built to accommodate that — and I think of the Trianon Centre that was just opened — in the common room there, upstairs, there is a stove and fridge to accommodate exactly what the member is talking about.

I don't believe that there's any single way at all that you can even begin to compare our enriched and innovative housing program compared to what the NDP put prior to 1984. As I look, you know, at one — and this is a project in Saskatoon that the member should be familiar with — some of the special features that we have now are adjustable European-style kitchen cabinets so that the seniors are in fact able to adjust the shelving units on it. They have high-quality carpeting along with the new modern coloured appliances in their kitchen, cultured marble bathroom fixtures with non-slip flooring which is very important for our seniors.

This one has got full accessibility for wheelchairs; laundry facilities on each and every floor, which is something that was not available before; oak finished doors and baseboards so that it looks modern and they feel good and comfortable in it. A 24-hour emergency monitoring system is available in this unit. Outdoor and heated indoor parking is available for these seniors. Extended balcony railings for extra security, along with the public lounge that I . . . well there's two lounges — there's a public lounge in the Trianon that I can think of, and then there's a lounge upstairs for their use. So I believe that our enriched housing is far and a way superior from anything that was ever done before.

Ms. Smart: — well, Mr. Minister, you've done exactly what I thought you would probably do. You have rolled enriched housing and innovative housing projects all together.

I'm well aware of that project in Richmond Heights because it's in Saskatoon Centre, and I'm going to talk to you about that in due course. But what you have done is combine the enriched housing with the innovative housing and you've given me a list of services that are available in a very particular kind of housing unit in Saskatoon. And I'm talking about the units that are built under what you call your enriched housing program.

And I want to just mention a couple of the other features that you say are involved in this enriched housing. And if

you can't distinguish between the enriched housing program and the innovative housing, then you really haven't got a good handle on what the corporation has been doing. And it's part of the smoke and mirrors of your government that you will use language like this, that you will call housing enriched when it's not enriched, and that you will incorporate it altogether in one when it's actually two separate programs.

Now under the enriched housing, you boast that your government is providing people with things like volunteer services, transportation services. Now volunteer services can be provided in all sorts of housing. It depends on the groups in the community that offer that volunteer service. In many communities, volunteer service in transportation is offered to seniors wherever they live. That is not providing enriched housing by the government just because volunteers come in and offer some assistance to the seniors. In fact, your government has cut back on the funding to the volunteer groups that wanted to help the seniors.

So when you say in your report that you're offering volunteer services as part of your enriched housing, that's all, again, part of the smoke and mirrors.

You say in your report that, "The provision of health care, based on assessed need, continues to be an important service to residents," as if this was some special service under your enriched housing. This care is provided through the volunteer efforts of the local home care district and funded by Saskatchewan Health, and that is home care.

And that is available to seniors wherever they live. Wherever they live, they have access to home care — limited, mind you, because of the lack of funding and because they have limited resources. But home care is being advertised as a feature of enriched housing when it's available to everyone.

So my comment to you is that the enriched housing, the enriched senior citizens' projects . . . And there's a picture in this report of a sign outside a building advertising it, and I've been and visited the so-called enriched housing in places like Swift Current, and the seniors have said to me, what's enriched about this? Yes, there are laundry facilities on certain floors. That's available often in apartment buildings. That's not unique. Volunteer services are provided to people everywhere.

Now I want to know from you the rents, how the rents are determined in these units that you call enriched housing; and don't include the units that are innovative housing. Will you please restrict yourself to the enriched housing. How are the rents determined?

It is my understanding that the enriched housing would be totally subsidized rents, but I'm not sure. And I want to be clear with the seniors, and I would like you to be clear with me. When people go into one of your so-called enriched housing projects, which are not enriched, are they subsidized? Is it a low income housing unit like our housing authority buildings that I'm familiar with in Saskatoon Centre that were built under the New Democrats, or what is it? Can you answer me the question

about the rent.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, there was about a dozen questions in there, but I don't know what she's all excited about. If she would be honest with the people . . . the annual report, and I'll read from the annual report. She says that I'm trying to fool people or hide things. Let's read it:

The provision of health care, based on the assessed need, continues to be an important service to residents.

Now pay attention.

This care is provided through the volunteer efforts of the local Home Care District, and funded by Saskatchewan Health.

We're not hiding anything. It's right in our annual report. We freely admit that. And we simply supply the space — space that wasn't provided in your housing under the NDP administration.

By and large, your housing was semi-detached units. Our discussions with seniors, they wanted more than that, so we now have common corridors; we have common space areas that they can use; we have room for the volunteers with which to work — things that you didn't provide in your era.

And then let's talk some more about the enriched housing, because again you try to fool the people. Look at the annual report and read all of it, not part of it. Let's look at innovative housing. You say I don't know the difference, you don't know the difference. Let's just look at a few.

Saskatoon Luther Heights — we'll talk about the Saskatoon ones. Senior enriched, where we assisted in 30 units while they put up 90, for a total of 120. That didn't happen — those extra 90 units under your administration would never be there.

Saskatoon Bethany Manor. We assisted in 21, they put up an additional 56. Those 56 never would have been there. Let's continue.

Saskatoon McClure. We subsidized 29, they put up another 80, another 80 that would never have been there. And on and on, for a total under the innovative side, of 245 assisted units, complemented by an additional 302.

Now in the areas where we did direct delivery, and this is all from the annual report, Mr. Chairman, it shows the other senior enriched where we delivered them directly, where unfortunately the community or some church organization or group wasn't able to assist in the delivery of those program. So you can see the difference, a total of some 60 units, and they sat there.

If this could have come in under the innovative, maybe there would have been an additional 30 or 40 and we would have been able to have another 30 or 40 units for our seniors. So when you tell me that innovative housing isn't working, when you tell me that innovative and

enriched are all mixed up, you're obviously not even reading the annual report.

Ms. Smart: — I've read the annual report, Mr. Minister, and I know that what you're talking about are services that are provided to everyone. I can take you to many of the senior units in Saskatoon that were built by the New Democrats, that are built with apartments on central corridors. That's nothing new.

In the report you say, "... 68 Enriched Housing units were constructed by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation." You didn't answer my question about the rents being subsidized, but I'm going to assume that they are because we're running out of time.

Your report also says that, "... 431 enriched units will be constructed through (the) Innovative Housing." Now you're using the word enriched for two kinds of housing. And I just want people in Saskatchewan to be clear on that when I talk about the seniors, because the innovative housing is enriched. It's very rich; it's a very fine program of what should be available for all seniors. But under your government it's available to many, many seniors of high income who can buy into those units — the example in Richmond Heights, Saskatoon Centre constituency.

You also call these units, or they're also called service housing, which is different than enriched housing, and the design is based on a Swedish concept. And I want to congratulate the people who built it on looking to Sweden for some ideas, because Sweden, under social democracy, has got some good ideas about how housing should be for people and how housing should be for seniors.

And those kinds of houses, that innovative housing includes many features which should be available to many seniors, not just to the people who can pay the amount of money — 63,000 to \$87,000 payments — to get into the place, and then you've got your monthly maintenance fees. And it includes a lot of good things, like restaurant meals, and 24-hour emergency service, and access to a community health nurse and social worker, and dietary counselling, and a non-denominational chaplain, and many other things.

Now of those 120 units in that particular one in Richmond Heights, only 30 are low income units, and they're scattered throughout. And the government has financed them by \$2.5 million of federal and provincial money.

There is a distinction then between enriched and innovative, and I want to know where the money for funding the innovative housing is listed. Is that under the public housing in the Estimates?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well I hope the sponsors of those enriched units are listening to this argument. You know, where the NDP, Mr. Chairman, were concerned with the low income seniors only, and it stopped there, our concern is for the low income seniors, certainly. And that's reflected in the numbers that we're delivering and in the other numbers that we're able to deliver. But we coupled that with what the church groups want to do.

They want to look after their moderate income and high income senior families and let them share the same space and life-style. That was never available to them before.

It was kind of silly for lifelong friends to have to live differently or to have to live apart from where their ordinary friends were, whereas now, through the facilities offered through these church groups we have a mixture of the low income, the moderate and high income seniors living together. And it shows in the annual report that the rents are subsidized. It says, assisted units, so obviously the rent is subsidized for the low income seniors. And now we've got a mix there of the low and moderate income seniors being able to enjoy a complete senior life together.

We put common corridors into areas of rural Saskatchewan where before under the NDP those common areas and common hallways and the like were almost non-existent. You mentioned Saskatoon. I'm talking now, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, I'm talking all of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few questions to the minister. Mr. Minister, I'm asking for some technical detail that I hope you have available from your officials here today.

The first question I want to ask you is . . . you made a statement in the House last night that the budget for low income housing is the greatest in the history of the province. I wonder if you would provide us, sir, with your record from 1982 to 1987, the number of low income housing units built by Sask Housing Corporation.

(1645)

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, my officials don't have those numbers available right now, and I would, rather than have an impasse with the member, I would recommend this: first of all, we will check Hansard. I believe that I said that we are delivering the highest percentage of our annual budget now towards low family income than ever before. I was talking budget dollars. And we don't have that information here.

But as the member well knows, we will be going into Crown corporation hearings. When Sask Housing goes into Crown corporations, I will undertake for my officials to have those dollar amounts available for your perusal at that time if that's satisfactory to you.

Mr. Lyons: — Well, Mr. Minister, that's fine provided that it's understood that I'm requesting not only the year under review, which is last year in terms of Crown corporation, but I'm also requesting that you provide the number of units built from 1982, each of the years 1982 to 1987 inclusive. If that's understood, then your answer is acceptable.

Second technical question I'd like to ask you and for information to produce is the total amount of dollars and the breakdown of the dollars spent on advertising by Sask Housing Corporation for each of the years 1982 through 1987 inclusive. Can you produce those numbers here today please?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, all that I have available to me is 1986 and 1987, if that's satisfactory, and I refer back to estimates, or Crown Corporation hearings where out of *Hansard* I say that the media advertising in 1985 was \$46,000; media advertising in 1986 was \$276,000. That's out of *Hansard* and these figures are \$275,532. And in 1987, the media advertising was \$44,262. So I hope that that's sufficient for you.

Mr. Lyons: — I notice the qualifying word "media advertising" in there, Mr. Minister. When you talk about media advertising, are you including the brochures and leaflets which are handed out advertising the home program. Are you including the costs of the mail-out to every person in Saskatchewan which would be classified as advertising?

Once again I repeat, I want the total amount of dollars spent on all advertising from the years 1982 through to 1987. If you don't have the figures now, I'd like an undertaking from yourself to supply it within one week to the Legislative Assembly, here, if you would be so kind to do so.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I believe, Mr. Chairman, that we're going to need a little time for my officials to put that number together, and rather than give them a deadline of a week, we will undertake to get that information available for Crown corporation hearing, which I understand I scheduled for a couple or three weeks from now, and we can go through it at that time.

Mr. Lyons: — I'm sorry, Mr. Minister, that's not acceptable because as you know very well that the Crown corporations is only the year under review. I'm requesting that you supply the Assembly a list of the spending, a list of the spending for the years outlined to the Legislative Assembly for all advertising, not just media but for all advertising done in those years that I enumerated.

Now are you saying that you're not going to supply that to the Assembly and that you will not give me that undertaking? Crown corporations is not good enough. You know very well your government's habit of saying, it's strictly the year under review. What we are asking you for is for spending of '86 . . . from '82, pardon me, to 1987. I want a list of all advertising, and I also would like that broken down by agency.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know what kind of an undertaking I can satisfy the member with because I understand that there is also a motion for return somewhere that my officials are looking at and trying to accomplish these numbers for.

And you know, I'd hate to guarantee that it would be there in seven days and not be able to supply that within seven days. I'm prepared to undertake to provide them with as much information on the advertising as I can — hopefully, prior to Crown Corporations in the next few weeks — or be prepared to respond at that time. I can't see what the problem is with that offer.

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Minister, first of all I think we're being

rather lenient in terms of the questioning. You're the minister responsible for Sask Housing. You should know how much money your housing corporation spent on advertising in '86 and '87. You were around then. You were part of the government. You know those.

It's not a question as if these figures, you know, haven't been tabulated. Obviously you've done some kind of . . . of should have some kind of financial control over the operation of Sask Housing Corporation.

I think it's a question of, dodge them. You're saying: we're not going to give you the figures; we're not going to give you the figures. And then you're saying, well it may not be seven days, and knowing you, you'll say it may not be 14 days or two months or two weeks. And when we get to Crown corporations, we expect the same kind of operation.

All I'm asking is a simple question from you, a simple response: give us the total amount of advertising spent by Sask Housing Corporation in the years that I ask. There's nothing wrong with that. Surely your officials could put that together within one week.

An Hon. Member: Over the supper hour.

Mr. Lyons: — And you could probably do it over the supper hour as well, Mr. Minister. In fact we may have to do it over the supper hour if we're not going to get any co-operation from you on this matter.

Now I'd like an indication, are we going to get that here in the legislature? Are you going to give it to us here in the legislature? Stop playing, stop playing the silly games; just tell us yes or no.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well I'm sorry that he's calling it silly games. You know, they asked this last year and it's in the records, and I quoted from *Hansard* and, you know, now you're establishing some other terminology to advertising that my officials are going to have to assemble this information. I don't know, you know, all of the . . . I told you the media advertising and what it related to, and in 1985 it was \$46,000; 1986 it \$276,000; and 1987 it was \$44,000.

Now the other information that you've got, you want to go back to 1982, I simply don't have that, and I said that I'm prepared to provide you with as much information as I can, and we're going into Crown corporation hearings, and hopefully if that information was compiled by my officials before then, it'll be available then. I can't see what's wrong with that. I'm not holding anything up at all.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to get some clarification here from the minister.

The member from Rosemont has asked the minister for the total advertising spent by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation for the year 1986-87. Now that was a fiscal year that is done and complete. That is the year for which there has been an annual report. That is the year for which there has been a Public Accounts finally tabled. So that information has got to be available. Now I am not clear on what the minister's response was.

Mr. Minister, are you going to provide that information for the year '86-1987? the total advertising expenditures for the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, and I expect you will provide it tonight because, Mr. Minister, you should have been able to provide it this afternoon when you would have had these estimates finished.

As long as you continue not to co-operate with this committee, we're not going to finish your estimates.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — So I'm telling you, Mr. Minister, will you give us the undertaking that over the evening, over the supper hour, as often has happened in this legislature, you will send your officials away who will get that information and at 7 o'clock you will bring it to this House.

(1700)

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, you know, it's unfortunate that we're going to arrive at an impasse, but I suppose if we are, they're not prepared to accept my explanation. I can't expect my officials to go back within two hours and start compiling information from 1982 on. We don't have that information, and I've said that we don't have it.

I've provided you with the media advertising numbers that you had asked for, and you know, I don't have any other information here. You know, I can tell you that the 1986 expenditures included \$221,000 in respect of television/radio/newspaper advertising campaign for the home program. A balance of \$20,000, applicable to that campaign, was paid in 1987 and the like, but I just simply don't have what you're demanding. And you say I'm stonewalling at this point in time. And my officials don't have that, and I don't fully understand what the heck you're expecting us to provide.

Mr. Chairman: — Being near 5 o'clock, the committee will resume at 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.