

## EVENING SITTING

## MOTIONS

**Resolution No. 5 — Effects of Changes in Prescription Drug Plan (continued)**

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to continue in this debate and in seconding this very important motion from my hon. colleague from Saskatoon Centre. This motion is as follows, and I read:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to reverse its decision to ruin the Saskatchewan prescription drug plan, thereby immediately increasing the cost of prescription drugs and placing an unfair and severe financial burden on Saskatchewan residents least able to afford these increases: Saskatchewan seniors, the chronically ill, low income and single parent families.

As I indicated before supper, Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have the opportunity to second such an important motion. Possibly no other issue is placing such hardship on Saskatchewan individuals and families as this PC government's cuts to the prescription drug program. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware of the devastation of job lay-offs, starving children, and cuts to the dental plan and so on. However, I see the cuts to the prescription drug program related to starving children and malnourished seniors because of the added cost to them under the cuts.

To summarize my comments before supper, Mr. Speaker, I talked about this government's lack of credibility in the field of health care; about the need for the prescription drug program to be restored to its previous form; I talked about this government's dismantling of the health care system in general, piece by piece; about this government's arrogance and insensitivity to the plight of victims of their policies. I talked about the evolving two-tier health care system in Saskatchewan. I talked about how all of the other tax increases by this government have exacerbated the financial hardships created by additional drug costs, and about the degree to which, as an example, four specific drugs have increased for one of my constituents over the past seven months, anywhere from 25 per cent to indeed tripling, Mr. Speaker.

I talked about how hand-outs to the Pocklington, the Remais, the Hills and the Schoenhals, and other government friends, have taken priority over the health care needs of all Saskatchewan residents. It's not people first with this PC government. Money for vacant office space, unnecessary government advertising, and flying off to family weddings at taxpayers' expense, but no money for prescription drugs, Mr. Speaker, or necessary surgery or dental care, for that matter. In fact, I heard the Minister of Health, at Holy Cross in Saskatoon, say that the dental care program was a fringe health care program, Mr. Speaker, and we don't accept that.

Mr. Speaker, before supper I cited seven specific examples from Saskatoon Eastview where hardships were being created by the attitude and cold-hearted policies in the prescription drug program of this current government. I talked about the arrogance, the arrogance of the Premier of this province, to criticize ordinary Saskatchewan residents as drug pushers and drug abusers. It's because of this kind of poor leadership that we in Saskatchewan are in such a poor financial and economic position.

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

**Mr. Pringle:** — Our Premier could take a few lessons on governing from ward aldermen from our cities.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I talked about concerns expressed by seniors — pioneers who this government likes to talk about as pioneers — and how they are just sick of what they see happening in the dismantling of the health care system, especially cuts, in their case, to the prescription drug program, and last year cuts to home care.

Saskatchewan residents are used to a government in previous years that says one thing, Mr. Speaker, and does it, and did it. This government has no mandate to cut the prescription drug program. They have no mandate to cut the dental care program, as well. They didn't talk about that a year and a half ago during the election. They dismantle the health care system, piece by piece, then they respond to public pressure to setting up a health care task force. It's basically a response to political pressure — very little thought and planning going into it. By saying that, I don't mean to be critical of the members of the task force but it's just another opportunity to buy 18 months, two years, by this government.

During Saskatoon Eastview, Regina Elphinstone by-elections, all parties heard concerns at the doorstep about the prescription drug program and the hardships created, so we had the last minute idea of a plastic card system. As of this day we still do not know any more about this plastic card. And plastic cards are not going to solve the problems in health care and the prescription drug program for people of Saskatchewan.

As I indicated earlier, this government has a lack of credibility in its rhetoric about protecting the health care system in this province. I know that, having gone door to door, to thousands of doors, let alone being trusted to build and prepare the health care system for the '90s and beyond. The credibility of this government in the health care field is at rock bottom, Mr. Speaker, and I think proof of that was in the by-elections.

Some of my first impressions about being a new member — and it's often thrown up to me that I'm a new member and members opposite were hoping for better things and new ideas — it struck me, Mr. Speaker, it's . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I hope you join the debate. I hope the member from Regina Wascana joins the debate. I'm sure he will.

At any rate, it struck me, Mr. Speaker, that this government continues, in the face of two by-election losses, to be very, very arrogant and I'm concerned about

that because I do want some opposition in 1990 to be opposite us. So I hope that they be a little bit humble over the next couple of years. They may get some support.

I've also realized since I've come here, Mr. Speaker, the incredible incompetence that we see across the floor. And it's no wonder, I can see clearly now, why this province is in financial economic trouble. I also have been able to see, Mr. Speaker, the lengths at which this PC government goes to hold politic expediency as the rule of the day. They do not plan in any comprehensive or futuristic way. And I think that was evidenced by last week, when the minister of privatization, or piratization, talked about this government being right there in the 1890s. And I agree, that's where he is, in the 1890s.

We also concur with the minister of privatization: not only is he back in the 1890s but his health care policies are archaic and back there as well. And somehow I fail to understand the PC rhetoric that to build a health care system by dismantling it piece by piece . . . Mr. Speaker, the question . . . I've heard members opposite say, that we cannot afford this growing health care system. I would suggest first of all, Mr. Speaker, that the amount of new money going into health care is very, very misleading by this government. I would say further, Mr. Speaker, that we cannot afford not to pay for health care for the citizens of Saskatchewan. We're talking about the health of our citizens, after all.

Saskatchewan led the way in the development of universal medicare systems, because people of this province, Mr. Speaker, believed that access to quality health care should be dependent on need, not on wealth. The work of Tommy Douglas and many other women and men in this province addressed this issue many years ago and established this principle. I thought it was an accepted principle in this province, Mr. Speaker, but I see now, from the attitudes and policies of this government, that that's not the case. We're still fighting for fundamental principles, fundamental access to health care.

Is the pioneer work of people of the Douglas era in vain under this government, Mr. Speaker? I say it may be, if the government continues to dismantle our health care system as they have done in the last year and one-half. The Progressive Conservatives have never been committed to health care, Mr. Speaker. They have not been philosophically committed to it. These are the same people who opposed it vigorously 26 years ago. They believe in a double standard of health care — one standard for those who are well-to-do and another standard for those who aren't. The rest can do with what's left.

That's not good enough, Mr. Speaker, for the people of this province. Certainly there is room to reassess our spending priorities. New challenges emerge, new realities emerge, and we need to reassess our techniques and strategies. What we do not need to reassess, though, is that the system should be based on equity, accessibility, compassion, and affordability. And I think those are the principles that this government has thrown out the window, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly we were well aware that there's a balance required between preventive health care and acute health care, and that's always a delicate balance and always will be. But if the PC government really believed in preventive health care, Mr. Speaker, they would not have cut preventive programs like the prescription drug program, the children's dental program, cutting back on home care last year. I find an inconsistency in an approach that cuts preventive programs and then tries to respond to public pressure by saying, well we're going to set up a health care task force. It seems to be the cart before the horse, which is the usual practice of this government.

Health care, like taxes, Mr. Speaker, is an area where this government has broken every promise that it ever made. And as I said, this government has lost the trust of the people of this province to preserve and protect and build a health care system. That is no more evident than in the prescription drug cuts.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, it's with the greatest pride that I speak to this motion put forward by the member from Saskatoon Centre. I was elected to deliver a message to this government about high taxes, poor job creation, financial and economic mismanagement, and health care cuts — specifically cuts to the prescription drug program. And I'll have more to say on this later, Mr. Minister, but . . . or Mr. Speaker, as I said, I take great pride in seconding this motion. Thank you.

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

(1915)

**Mr. Petersen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The previous speakers spoke of this government maligning the people of Saskatchewan, and I can only say that in so far as attempting to malign the members opposite, it would be impossible because anything I could say could only be a compliment.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard nothing but dull and boring NDP scare tactics and rhetoric for the last three hours, wasting the time of this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, we have heard them talk about how they care about the seniors of this province, about the poor people of this province, and, Mr. Speaker, when they were in government they did absolutely nothing for the seniors. Oh, I forgot. They gave them a \$5 increase on their supplement — \$5, Mr. Speaker. I almost forgot about that. That's their claim to fame.

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

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Point of order, Mr. Speaker. Before the member gets too carried away, I wonder if he could be reminded of what the motion is that is being debated.

**Mr. Petersen:** — With regards to that, Mr. Speaker, I think you yourself have heard members opposite talk about seniors, the poor, and how the drug plan, and changes to it and the health care system, has affected them. And I wanted to start out exactly where they left off, Mr. Speaker. I bow to your ruling.

Thank you. Let's check the facts on the drug plan, for example. Let's check the facts. Health care, Mr. Speaker, in this province, has increased 68 per cent since 1982. They talk about cuts in health care, they equate changes to the drug plan as cuts in health care. Well, Mr. Speaker, the drug plan that we have in Saskatchewan is very, very similar to that which was in effect in Manitoba, and is still in effect in Manitoba under an NDP administration. I can't see what they find so terrible about the way it works today.

And they try to prey upon the fears of the seniors that we have. Well, Mr. Speaker, in 1988, 105,000 senior citizens will receive benefits through the senior citizens' heritage program — \$40 million, Mr. Speaker, from this government, this uncaring Tory government you've just heard about.

Mr. Speaker, \$40 million is a lot of money. And it's a lot more than the \$5 that the members opposite and the party opposite provided.

Let's take a look at something else, Mr. Speaker. Let's take a look at nursing homes. These seniors, they talk about who are having to pay for their drug plan costs, part of their drug plan costs . . . Nursing homes, Mr. Speaker, were unheard of. Building of nursing homes were unheard of under the previous administration. They had a moratorium. It's well-known; it's a fact; they've admitted it readily.

Instead of building nursing homes in 1978, '79, and '80 when my grandfather needed a nursing home bed, do you know what happened in my riding? I had liquor board stores, million dollar monoliths built in my riding — three of them — to sell liquor when my grandfather didn't have a nursing home bed. And they talk about caring for people. Come on, Mr. Speaker, let's not be ridiculous.

They built the T.C. Douglas building, they had their family of Crown corporations, but they did not care about the average senior citizen and the average person in this province.

Mr. Speaker . . . I think, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite have demonstrated very clearly that all they have to offer is rhetoric and only rhetoric. They have had no new ideas. We have introduced program after program to assist farmers, to assist home-makers, the pension plan, the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

You talk about us being uncaring as part of the reason why we changed the drug plan. Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not so. Mr. Speaker, there were people out on the streets who were victims of drug abuse, and it's true, it's true, they were. We had people who were ripping off the system and going out on the street, selling drugs that they had gotten through devious means, and, Mr. Speaker, that's wrong, and we've been attempting to put a stop to it. And when we try to do that, we are maligned by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what else one can say except to look at the number of dollars that we've put into our health care system, over a billion dollars go into that system. And it's in the building of hospitals. We have just

opened new wings. The Wascana Rehab Centre is being refurbished and added on to, Mr. Speaker.

In small town Saskatchewan, we have taken some of our smaller hospitals and turned them into integrated care facilities. And that's something that meets two needs: it meets the medical emergency needs of the people who perhaps get injured while they're engaged in agriculture or what have you; and it also meets the needs of providing a care facility for our seniors in those small towns instead of having them drive 100 or 200 miles to a centralized storage centre that the members opposite envisaged as the epitome of health care for our seniors, of nursing home care for our seniors, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to dwell on a personal experience. I mentioned my grandfather. Well, Mr. Speaker, you talk about members opposite — and I know they have relatives, and I know they care about them, and I'm sure that they understand my feelings towards my grandparents — but in 1978, Mr. Speaker, my grandfather became unable to look after himself, and my grandmother was 88 years of age. Well, Mr. Speaker, that little old lady was forced to drive or to ask someone to drive her 85 miles to the town of Melfort where the only nursing home bed was available for my grandfather — 85 miles. They'd been married for 65 years.

Can you image how it feels, Mr. Speaker, to have spent 65 years with another person, living under the same roof, and then have to beg to ask one of your children or a neighbour or someone to once a week drive you 85 or 90 miles to visit that person — at 88 years of age? Can you understand that? Can members opposite understand that? I doubt it, I doubt it. If they would have cared, Mr. Speaker, they would have built nursing homes instead of liquor board stores; they would have provided money for health care instead of buying potash mines.

Well, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I got into politics was because of the very personal family experience. And it hurts, Mr. Speaker.

Now members opposite make a great hue and cry and a wonderful presentation of being sanctimonious and saying, well if it was one of your people who were sick, you wouldn't have done this. Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of us on this side who have relatives and friends who are afflicted in various ways, and we take no particular pride or pleasure or joy in saying, aha, you have to pay. We don't, Mr. Speaker. We take the responsible attitude of saying, you should pay for part of your drug costs. It's good enough for Manitoba that had an NDP government. Why isn't it good enough here?

We have got to get those costs under control, Mr. Speaker. We have to get some of the abuses out of the system. And I'm not saying that what we did was perfect by any matter of means; it was a step, and we have to continue. We have to look at changes to the health care system, Mr. Speaker, to improve it, to provide efficiencies.

The members opposite, when you say the word "efficiencies," they all shudder and cringe because their

only idea of efficiency is where you come in and you cut or slash, and they're very fond of using the words "cut and slash." Well, Mr. Speaker, efficiencies come in many forms — many forms. If you can provide 24 hour a day usage of equipment that we have bought as taxpayers, you will have the most efficient use of that equipment. And we've been working towards that; we've been attempting to have that. We saw the cancer clinic having some problems in that regard. Very expensive equipment sitting idle 14, 16 hours a day, Mr. Speaker, and that doesn't make any sense to me. And those are the types of things that we mean when we talk about efficiencies.

And so we put in place a task force, a health care task force. And the members opposite, as usual, have yelled too little, too late, not enough. It's a cover-up. You name it, I think I've heard just about every piece of rhetoric and every cliché ever invented dumped on us this afternoon and evening. But, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with a billion dollar industry — over a billion dollars — with people's lives, Mr. Speaker. We are attempting to provide the best care we can and get the best bang for our buck.

Their solution is just to throw dollars at it, never mind where it comes from or how it's spent. And the NDP in Manitoba were a good example of that. Look at their deficit. Look at what happened to them. They didn't care how they spent it; they just borrowed her and spent her, boy, fast and loose.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite feel that we are treading on their ground when we deal in the health care field. Health care has always been the sacred lamb or the sacred cow or what would you of the NDP. Well, MR. Speaker, they forfeited that claim in 1978 when they started slapping moratoriums on nursing homes. They forfeited that claim, Mr. Speaker, when they said that waiting lists were efficient. That's their idea of efficiency. They forfeited those claims, and the member sitting opposite, from Saskatoon South, said that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you take a look at the task force that we have put in place to deal with health care, it will include the drug plan, it will include nursing homes, it will include waiting lists. And, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the calibre of the people that were sitting in that gallery today — your gallery — to listen to the members opposite deride and run them down and stand up and accuse them of being puppets and all the rest of it, I can only reiterate the words of the minister today, the Minister of Health, when he asked the Leader of the Opposition to apologize to those people, especially to Mr. Walter Podiluk, a man who has served this province long and well, much longer and . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. The member for Kelvington-Wadena, I know, has a great deal he would like to share with the House. However I ask him to relate his remarks to the topic. I'm afraid he's a little bit off. He's not relating it to the resolution.

**An Hon. Member:** — Tell us everything you know; we've got another 30 seconds.

**Mr. Petersen:** — I doubt that you'd be able to absorb it.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize if I have strayed from the specific topic of prescription drugs. And I will direct my remarks towards the prescription drug plan as it affects seniors and low-income people, and people who are forced to live in low-income situations, and people who are on welfare, and people who are receiving benefits that this government has provided. Mr. Speaker, members opposite seemed to allude to that on a number of occasions, but I thank you for bringing me back to the topic.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at drugs in our society today . . . And members opposite disagree that there's a problem with legal drugs and abuse of legal drugs. Well I ask you to go and check some of the constituents that you are so concerned about, some of the many names that you claim to have hidden in your desk drawers for a month or two or three before you sanctimoniously haul them out and say, aha, here's another person but I haven't done anything for three months, but here's another person who is having problems with the drug plan or what have you. Mr. Speaker, they use those people for political purposes, which is wrong, Mr. Speaker — wrong, wrong, wrong.

Now, Mr. Speaker, members opposite have sanctimoniously sat there, stood there, and spoke on and on and on about the prescription drug plan and how it will affect the standard of living of a number of people. Well, Mr. Speaker, I said, and I don't back down from it, that the changes that were made are not perfect and they require some fine tuning. And we have introduced some changes; we have introduced some changes.

And we have heard the term, "fantastic plastic." The plastic card we're talking about, Mr. Speaker, will streamline a number of problems that the members opposite have talked about. They've talked about having too long a turn-around time on the rebates. Well that may be so, Mr. Speaker. We've attempted to do our best, but it may be so. And the plastic card may be able to have some benefit in that regard, and therefore I don't think the members opposite should deride it or call it down.

Mr. Speaker, in the interests of work that this House has to do and in view of the fact that I think I've made a few very pertinent comments, I would beg leave to adjourn this debate.

Debate adjourned.

(1930)

#### **Resolution No. 8 — Meeting the Needs of Saskatchewan Families**

**Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the close of my remarks this evening, I will be moving this motion:

That this Assembly condemn the Government of Saskatchewan for failing to make the needs of Saskatchewan families a priority, as is evident in cut-backs to Saskatchewan health, education, and social services.

Mr. Speaker, the motion that I bring to this House tonight

speaks of priorities and the priorities particularly of this government. And it condemns this government, Mr. Speaker, for its lack of priority in terms of Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, I have learned that governing is essentially a matter of setting and choosing priorities — priorities in spending, priorities in legislation. Tonight I want to look at, with members present, the priorities undertaken by this government in their term of office, particularly since re-election in 1986, and to indicate to this House that, in my judgement, those priorities have been all wrong; that, in fact, they have taken many wrong directions in choosing priorities, and that Saskatchewan families are the worse because of it. Because of priorities taken by this government, Saskatchewan families have suffered. The priorities, Mr. Speaker, of this government, in my judgement, are all wrong, and I wanted to spend some time tonight on that subject.

Mr. Speaker, let me just run through a list of examples of the priorities that this government has undertaken which I see are wrong. Let's talk about one of their big spending priorities, Mr. Speaker. One of their big spending priorities is to install Jacuzzis, swimming pools in the backyards of those who can afford such luxuries. Major spending priority of this government — interestingly introduced just before an election.

This government believes in subsidizing luxuries for the rich, Mr. Speaker. Meanwhile it's widely known that we have 11,000 people waiting for hospital beds in Saskatoon. We're spending on providing luxuries for the rich while 11,000 people are on hospital waiting lists in Saskatoon. That's the wrong priority, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I've been told — I've no reason to doubt it and no government member opposite has stood in his place to deny it — I have been told that this government spend somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$200,000 to turn the sod for the Shand-Rafferty project — Mr. Speaker, \$200,000 for public relations to turn the sod on the project that we don't need, Mr. Speaker.

Meanwhile, in this province women and children, Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker, are being turned away from transition houses, turned away because of underfunding. Mr. Speaker, that's just the wrong kind of priority in spending and we've seen too much of it with this government.

Mr. Speaker, not so many weeks ago, at my office in Moose Jaw, arrived two box fulls, two box fulls of a free trade document — glossy pages. Mr. Speaker, I did not order this document; it just arrived in our office — two box fulls of them, Mr. Speaker, from the minister from Kindersley, two boxes for each MLA.

The document, Mr. Speaker, was nothing but self-serving propaganda for the free trade deal. Mr. Speaker, that kind of expenditure of public funds, that kind of self-serving advertising by this government while self-help groups in this province are closing their doors because of lack of funding. Welfare advocacy groups are closing their doors in this province because of lack of funding, and this government must be spending millions of dollars on

self-serving advertising. It's just, in my judgement, Mr. Speaker, the wrong kind of priority. It's not a priority that puts Saskatchewan families first.

Mr. Speaker, we've many times in this House described and discussed the level of patronage that we have seen as a priority of this government.

**An Hon. Member:** — Top priority.

**Mr. Calvert:** — It seems seems to have been a top priority, as my colleague says — top priority to employ every defeated MLA from the 1986 election. We could go through the lists, Mr. Speaker. Meanwhile, Saskatchewan young people are leaving this province in record numbers. They are fleeing this province, looking for employment and education elsewhere. It's a wrong priority, Mr. Speaker.

We're spending well over \$1 billion at the direction of this government for the Shand-Rafferty plant in the Premier's own constituency — a plant we do not need, Mr. Speaker, with dams that are going to destroy the environment of that part of our province. We're spending a billion ... well over a billion dollars on that project. At the same time in our province we've got quotas on universities, we've got hikes in tuition fees, we've got the loss of technical school spaces, and we've got hungry kids. I say it, Mr. Speaker, these are examples of the wrong priorities being chosen by this government.

And, Mr. Speaker, it has become obvious, it has become obvious that family concerns, real family concerns in this province, the real concerns of Saskatchewan families are not a priority, not a priority of this government. Clearly their priorities are megaprojects. Their priorities are looking after their family of corporate friends. Their real priorities are into the business of privatization and the sell-off of Saskatchewan. Their priorities, Mr. Speaker, are not the concerns of Saskatchewan families.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do want to say tonight that there is one thing that this government does very well, one thing that they seem to accomplish very well — they are exceptionally good with rhetoric. They are exceptionally good with public relations. They are, in many ways, the masters of phraseology and the masters of doublespeak, and they can create the slogans, and they can create the images. They are the masters of rhetoric.

But, Mr. Speaker, rhetoric only lasts so long. And after a while the rhetoric starts to get destroyed by the reality, and Saskatchewan people are seeing the reality that destroys the rhetoric. Their rhetoric would have us believe they are the friend of the Saskatchewan family. Mr. Speaker, well reality is quickly destroying that myth and even their best rhetoric, even their best rhetoric isn't about to repair it.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan families do have priorities for their government, and as I see them they are threefold. The first priority of Saskatchewan families and the priority they wish their government to uphold is the priority of health care — number one. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I believe Saskatchewan families' priority for their government is education. And thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I

believe that Saskatchewan people want their government to put priority into economic security and to the care of those who are least fortunate in our society. Those are the real priorities, Mr. Speaker, of Saskatchewan families.

What have we seen? Particularly since 1986, we've seen this government systematically attack in each of those areas — systematically attack health care, education, and the broad field of social services. And I do tonight, Mr. Speaker, want to discuss illustrations of each of those, if I may.

But before I move to those illustrations regarding health care and education and social services, let's discuss some other attacks. I can only describe them as attacks on Saskatchewan families that are coming out of this government — recent attacks, Mr. Speaker.

In this past two weeks, the government has announced the closure of the Cory potash mine, throwing literally hundreds of families, hundreds of people and families out of work. A secret decision was taken last fall, approved this spring by the board of directors, and the Cory potash mine in closing. Those are Saskatchewan families that are being affected, Mr. Speaker, and I submit the only reason for the closure of this mine is for their friends across the American border.

The decision was made last fall. The president of the potash corporation has admitted so much. He could have; the potash corporation could have; this government could have, if it cared about Saskatchewan families, it could have let those workers and their families know to give them time for planning. But no, they gave them nothing more than the required notice.

Now when one of those families wanted to speak with the president of the potash corporation, with the chairman of the board, she was denied, and so she wrote this letter, which we've discussed in this House before. And I want to read again, Mr. Speaker, this letter, because it's so indicative of this government's approach to Saskatchewan families and the way they treat ordinary working people in the province of Saskatchewan.

This letter was written from the wife of one of the potash workers. She wrote it to the minister responsible for the potash corporation, and she says in her letter, **Mr. Speaker:** —

I am writing (to) you to express my shock and dismay at Mr. Schoenhals' comments and personal attack on me.

Specifically, he accused me of being an irrational woman involved in a political exercise. I was also accused by Mr. Schoenhals of being involved in the protest stages by the Cory miners at Christmas, 1987 when our husbands were laid off. All of these statements are untrue, and I told Mr. Schoenhals that. He also accused me of acting on behalf of the Union and the NDP. When I denied this, he accused me of "lying."

I hope (that) you can appreciate (she says to the minister responsible for the potash corporation, I

hope that you can appreciate) that the last few days have been very stressful and I am bewildered and uncertain about my husband's and (my) family's future. I don't know where to turn. It is all so sudden. I was dumbfounded when Mr. Schoenhals advised me that "the decision to shut down Cory was made last fall!"

Many families could have avoided much of the hardship if we had been notified last fall. Perhaps my husband could have found alternate employment and minimized the trauma of suddenly being unemployed.

When I asked Mr. Schoenhals why he didn't give us more notice when he knew of the closure, he replied "We only have to give five weeks notice."

Mr. Speaker, that is how Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan families are treated at the hands of this government, and I think that's a shame, Mr. Speaker. And I think that tells you a great deal about their so-called priority for the Saskatchewan family.

Mr. Speaker, in recent days we've had legislation introduced to this House regarding shopping hours across our province. Mr. Speaker, groups interested and involved in family life in this province, small family-owned businesses, churches, many other community groups have all said, please give us a common day of rest for the sake of our families and the sake of our children. This government refuses. This government abdicates its responsibility to govern in this province. This government bows down to the super stores and the large corporate chains and says, we have neither the ability nor the power to regulate store hours, and so we'll just wash our hands of the entire issue.

Mr. Speaker, I thought there were members in this government who believe in a common day of rest. I thought there were members in this government who would stand up for a common day of rest in this province and ensure that a common day of rest could occur in this province for the sake of Saskatchewan families, for the sake of Saskatchewan people, for parents and their children. We will be watching very closely, Mr. Speaker. We'll be watching very closely to see how members opposite vote on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, this is the government who indicates that one of the greatest threats to family life in our province is the use and abuse of alcohol. This is the government that rightly so indicates the problem that faces Saskatchewan families in the abuse of drugs and alcohol.

(1945)

Mr. Speaker, this government that purports to support the family and purports to wish to deal with this crisis, this is the government that legalized the advertising of alcoholic beverages on television. This is the government that put the beer ads into our homes. This is the government that's influencing our young people. You and I both know, Mr. Speaker, that those particular ads are directed at young people. And you and I both know they are powerful and have their effect. This is the government that legalized the

advertising of alcoholic beverages on television, and they say that they are the great friends of Saskatchewan families.

This past week, Mr. Speaker, the very day, the very day that we're at the opening of the Whitespruce Centre, we are introducing legislation into this House to change The Liquor Act, to franchise out liquor sales all over this province so that there's some likelihood, perhaps every likelihood, we're going to see a liquor outlet on every street corner in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the government that claims to be the friend of Saskatchewan young people, that claims to be concerned about drug and alcohol abuse in our province. Mr. Speaker, the reality, the reality of what they do is destroying the rhetoric. Mr. Speaker, they are known, not for what they say, but for what they do — for what they do, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government, Mr. Speaker, who claims to be the great friend of Saskatchewan families. Well I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to review the taxation record of this government, review their taxation record and see how much of a friend they are to Saskatchewan families.

We have today, Mr. Speaker, the second highest income tax level on families in all of Canada — the second highest. At the same time we have the very highest rate of inflation. Second highest income tax level and the highest rate of inflation.

This is the government that promised to do away with the sales tax, a tax that is particularly, particularly applied to Saskatchewan families as they buy consumer goods. They promised to eliminate the sales tax in this province. What have they done? They've raised the sales tax, they've raised sales taxes in this province, increased them to 7 per cent.

This is the government that was elected on the promise to remove a gas tax. And they gave commitment to the people of this province that as long as this government was in office we'd never see a gas tax in Saskatchewan again. Not only did they reintroduce the gas tax, they raised it, and they instituted the most ludicrous scheme of tax rebate that could be imagined, Mr. Speaker.

This was the government, Mr. Speaker, that said they were going to cut our personal income taxes, again taxes that affect Saskatchewan families. They said they were going to cut our personal income taxes to 10 per cent — that was their promise. What did they do, Mr. Speaker? What did they do? They imposed a flat tax in 1985, and every year since that flat tax . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — I'm sure the hon. member for Moose Jaw South, as well, has a great deal of information he'd like to share with the House. However, the resolution relates, the topic under the discussion, to cut-backs in Saskatchewan health, education, and social services as it relates to Saskatchewan families. If you can relate your remarks to that, well you're quite permitted to go ahead and carry on.

**Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion as . . .

As you understand, Mr. Speaker, my motion and the intent of my motion tonight is to condemn this government for its lack of priority in terms of dealing with Saskatchewan families and their real needs and their real priorities, and the examples included in the motion include health care, education, and social services.

My point, Mr. Speaker, at present is that rather than assisting Saskatchewan families and indicating that Saskatchewan families are a priority through their tax measures, rather than offering a helping hand to Saskatchewan families, this government has its hand deep into the pocket-books and the bank accounts of those same families.

I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that in this province for every dollar, for every dollar paid in income tax by Saskatchewan families, 16 cents is paid by the corporate sector. For every dollar that you and I and Saskatchewan families are paying in income tax, the corporate sector pays 16 cents. Now that tells you who, that tells you who indeed merits the priorities of this government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk just a little bit about those Saskatchewan families that have been affected by cuts to health care and education and social services. Mr. Speaker, one in four Saskatchewan families, one of out every four Saskatchewan families now lives in poverty — one out of every four.

Many Saskatchewan families are single parents. In our own local newspaper just the other night, in the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, the headline read that the divorce rate in this country had reached an all-time high. Many Saskatchewan families consist of single parents, men and women raising children on their own. Many families, Mr. Speaker, many households consist of a single adult, perhaps a senior. Many families in our province are senior couples.

Mr. Speaker, there is a wide variety of families in our province and they've all been affected by this government. I think of families tonight, Mr. Speaker, I think of families tonight who must be looking out their kitchen window and watching their fields blow away. I think of the families that must be looking out their kitchen window and watching that bit of crop that did come up wither and dry in this heat. I think of those families who have perhaps a mountain of debt, just a mountain of debt, and I wonder, Mr. Speaker, how do they stand the pressure. How do they stand the pressure? And they just don't need the attacks by this government. They just don't need the cuts to health care; they just don't need the cuts to education.

Mr. Speaker, when you're in a crisis situation, when you're in hard times, you need good managers. And what we've had are hard times and poor managers, and it's left us in a tragic situation in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I think tonight of the families, hundreds of families in this province who are trying to live on unemployment. I think of the hundreds of parents who are out seeking work. Those families ought to be a priority for this government. Those are the families that feel the cuts in health and education and social services. Mr.

Speaker, I think of the hundreds of families that have turned to food banks in this province. Are they a priority of government? No, they are forgotten by this government. And when they're not forgotten, they're attacked by this government.

Mr. Speaker, this government has a priority and its priority is its family of corporate friends — that's its first priority. And Saskatchewan families, ordinary people in this province, come a very distant second.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend some time looking at some very specific illustrations from cuts to health care and education and social services and how they have affected family life in our province, because those three areas, Mr. Speaker, are the priorities of Saskatchewan people and they are priorities which this government has either simply forgotten or have chosen to walk away from.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin with social services. When we're talking about social services, we're talking about the very poorest of the poor in our province. Let me describe to you, Mr. Speaker, the extent of the problem in Saskatchewan tonight — the extent of the problem of poverty in Saskatchewan. And these figures, Mr. Speaker, are not from some NDP research production.

The figures I bring to this House tonight are from the *Poverty Profile 1988*, report by the National Council of Welfare, Government of Canada. Mr. Speaker, the figures contained in this report are tragic. They describe the year 1986, the most recent figures. In Saskatchewan the number of persons classified as falling under the category of poverty, 189,700 — almost 190,000 people in this province classified as living in poverty. That's 19.8 per cent of the population. Almost 20 per cent of the population of Saskatchewan are described as living in poverty. Mr. Speaker, that's the second highest rate in the country. We're second only to Newfoundland with a percentage of 22.8 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, if we look at how many individuals are described as living in poverty in our province in 1986, it's 40,300. How many families, Mr. Speaker, are described as living in poverty in the province of Saskatchewan in the year 1986? Forty-two thousand, six hundred families — 42,600 families or 16.4 per cent of Saskatchewan families live in poverty.

Mr. Speaker, if we break those figures down and look at children living in poverty in this province, we find that in families in Saskatchewan there are 64,600 children living in poverty — 64,600 children or 25.7 per cent of all children in Saskatchewan live in poverty. One-quarter of all children living in Saskatchewan live in poverty — one out of four.

Mr. Speaker, what is this government's reaction to the crisis of poverty in Saskatchewan? Well let's just take one illustration, one illustration. Let's talk about the cut of the transportation allowance to Saskatchewan families living in poverty. That's one of this government's responses to the crisis: cut the transportation allowance. This is the government that says to poorest of our poor, get out and get a job; pay your own way. Then this same government cuts the means by which individuals can get

to a job interview. They've cut the transportation allowance, which in essence is a bus pass, Mr. Speaker. This is the government that says, you've got to go to school, you need education. Then this same government cuts the transportation allowance that enables people to get from their homes to a school.

Mr. Speaker, I will not soon forget one cold winter morning last year when my colleague and I were leaving Moose Jaw to come to Regina early in the morning. At 7:30 in the morning we see standing on a bus stop a young mother holding a 18-year-old child. I happen to know . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Eighteen-month-old.

**Mr. Calvert:** — An 18-month-old child, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I happen to know that that woman was involved in adult upgrading. I happen to know that she was receiving social service. I thought to myself, as we sat in our warm car, here is a woman determined to make her life better and to make the life for her child better. And she was standing on a bus stop at 7:30 in the morning so that she could drop her child off at a relative so that she could get to school by 9 o'clock. Now, Mr. Speaker, that woman doesn't even have a bus pass, doesn't even have a bus pass so that she can go to school, Mr. Speaker. Is this helping Saskatchewan families? Is this helping a Saskatchewan young mother and her young child, I ask you?

Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote at some length from an article which appeared just a matter of days ago in the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*. It's dated Wednesday, May 25, 1988. And it talks about the effect that this cutting of this transportation allowance is having on the health care of Saskatchewan's poorest. And the quotes I take from this article, Mr. Speaker, are from doctors who are on staff at the Westside Community Clinic in Saskatoon. They have no political axe to grind. They know the reality of pain and suffering that's happening in their city. Let me quote:

Dr. Steven Hellier said pre-natal patients, who should be visiting the clinic regularly, now delay coming in.

People are simply missing appointments. They either have young kids and no money for child care or they have to walk eight blocks in freezing cold weather.

(And) I'd like to see Schmidt and his staff walk eight blocks . . . to see a doctor (in the cold).

Dr. Philip Loftus, another physician at the clinic, said many patients who are referred to specialists for further investigation of a medical problem don't go.

He said the travel allowance cut compounded a problem that already existed and that people needed an increase in benefits, not a decrease.

Travel allowance cuts impose undue hardships on an already deprived segment of our society.



Dr. Mel Langer, another of the clinic physicians, recently retired, said, referring to the cut in the transportation allowance:

It causes a qualitative and a quantitative increase in mental health problems. It will cause a feeling of entrapment, isolation and hopelessness.

Private violence is bound to increase, nutrition is bound to be affected, and children will suffer the most.

(2000)

Mr. Speaker, the cost of a bus pass per month for the poorest of our poor to enable them to get medical help, to enable them to get the educational opportunities they need and want in many cases, to enable them to get the job interviews — and if they're lucky enough to get some work, to enable them to get to those part-time jobs and those jobs . . . And this government has cut the transportation allowance, this government who purports to be the great friend of Saskatchewan families. Mr. Speaker, I find this to be disgraceful and I find that the reality is quickly destroying the rhetoric that we've heard so much of.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to the young people of our province. It's been said so often, but it remains true, that they are the future of our province. And when we're talking about family life in our province, we are talking about young people, and they are leaving this province in record numbers, Mr. Speaker. They're leaving this province because they see little hope in staying in Saskatchewan. They are fleeing Saskatchewan looking for education and looking for employment elsewhere.

Again, let me describe for you the extent of the problem, Mr. Speaker. In June of 1987, June of last year, the policy secretariat of the Premier's own Executive Council, the policy secretariat prepared a very confidential economic forecast for the period beginning 1987 to 1995. This document — the government's own document — Mr. Speaker, forecasts a very significant out-migration of Saskatchewan people because of the poor economic conditions here. And I quote from the document, page 5 of the document: "Economic prospects in Saskatchewan are worse than in central Canada, encouraging people to leave the province." This forecast indicates that about 85,000 people, 85,000 people could migrate from the province between now and 1985. This government itself is predicting an out-migration from Saskatchewan by 1995 of 85,000 people. That's well over twice the size of the city that I represent.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the figures broken down by age group, by far the vast majority of those who will be leaving are peoples between the ages of 15 and 29. The young people of Saskatchewan are being forced to flee Saskatchewan both for employment and for education.

Under the stewardship of this government, Mr. Speaker, we have seen, for the very first time in Saskatchewan's history, quotas put on enrolments in our universities. Mr. Speaker, under the stewardship of this government, we have seen over 1,000 training spaces in our technical

institutes cut. Under the stewardship of this government, we've seen dramatic increases in tuition fees. Under the cuts to our education in this government, we've seen tax increases on a local level; we've seen school boards cut back in their funding. Mr. Speaker, under the stewardship of this government, we see unrealistic, totally unrealistic student job programs for the summer.

Mr. Speaker, when you attack Saskatchewan's education, when you attack Saskatchewan's youth, you are attacking Saskatchewan families and indeed the very future of our province.

Mr. Speaker, not so long ago I spoke to a couple who have three children. All three of their children have left the province, left the province in search of either education or employment, and that couple are broken-hearted, because to quote them, they said, we hoped that we could watch our grandchildren grow up. And they will not be able to do that, Mr. Speaker, not be able to do that.

This is the government that claims to be the great friend of Saskatchewan families. Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric is being destroyed by the reality.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me turn to health care. This is the government that destroyed the school-based children's dental plan. And a perfect example of the way they treat Saskatchewan families is the very way they went about ending that plan.

Do you remember, Mr. Speaker, do you remember the way this government called in the 3 to 400 workers, many of them women, many of them mothers, many of them home-makers as well as working? They hauled them in, Mr. Speaker, like lambs to the slaughter, brought them into a room and told them, your careers are finished; pack up your bags; you're gone in a few weeks. Mr. Minister, that's the kind of approach this government takes to Saskatchewan families, and it's a sad commentary on this government.

This is the government that has stood by while physicians and specialists have left our province. This is the government that stands by while Saskatchewan hospitals have to go out and beg for funding, have to get out there and compete for that charitable dollar so that we can equip our hospitals. And this is the government that stands by while we have these horrendous waiting lists — 11,000 people on the waiting lists in the city of Saskatoon alone. Mr. Speaker, this is the government that it's widely recognized by the people of Saskatchewan have betrayed Saskatchewan health care, and they stand condemned whether this motion passes or not, Mr. Speaker. This government already stands condemned in the public eye, particularly for their attacks on health care in this province.

Mr. Speaker, this very night, this very night a woman from the Saskatchewan city of Prince Albert lies in a Calgary motel room dying, Mr. Speaker. She couldn't get care in this province for her terminal illness; she found that that care was available in Calgary. Tonight she's in a motel room in Calgary, away from her community, away from her friends, away from many of her family, away from the support of her church. She lies in a motel room in Calgary,

Alberta, Mr. Speaker, because health care for her was not available in Saskatchewan.

Her family, Mr. Speaker, her loved ones, some of whom live in my constituency, have called me this week. They have written the Minister of Health. They are lobbying this government to at least provide the funding for this woman and her care in Calgary. Mr. Speaker, I just think it's a sad day in Saskatchewan, it's a sad day for a Saskatchewan family when a loved one must flee this province to find the care she needs. It's a sad day, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this government has set its priorities, and they are obvious to all the people in Saskatchewan. They have priorities that include money for office space, not used. They have money for lots of travel. They have money for conferences that go on on yachts. They have money for patronage. They have money to promote free trade. They have money for their whole family of corporate friends. They've got money for a billion dollar project in the Premier's own constituency, but you see, we don't have money, they say, for a mother on welfare and her year and a half old child for a bus pass; we don't have money for a family who would like to see their young people stay at home. We don't have money, they say, even for a woman who so desperately needs care and her family must watch a loved one suffer.

Mr. Speaker, this government has set its priorities. I believe its priorities are all wrong. The priority does not include Saskatchewan families. So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon South:

That this Assembly condemn the Government of Saskatchewan for failing to make the needs of Saskatchewan families a priority, as is evident in cut-backs to Saskatchewan health, education, and social services.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure to participate in the debate this evening. And I have a number of things that I want to say, Mr. Speaker, on the three areas of health, education, and social services as they relate to the families in Saskatchewan and particularly, Mr. Speaker, as our families have been affected by the policies of this government in the last six or seven years.

Mr. Speaker, as it has been amply demonstrated this afternoon and this evening by my colleagues, when it comes the individual person in this province, particularly individuals who have no connection to this government from a political point of view or political sense, they do not fare very well. And should you, Mr. Speaker, in any way, shape, or form be critical of this government on their policies, then, Mr. Speaker, you better watch out, because then the big hammer comes down.

I want to demonstrate this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, not by what I have said, but what others have said and how they have been affected by this government.

**An Hon. Member:** — This evening.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — This afternoon and this evening and I thank the . . . Well I was anticipating that I will still be going tomorrow afternoon, Mr. Speaker, on this particular debate because it is a very important debate.

Mr. Speaker, when we look back at the policies of this government — and this government and the Premier claim that social services and health and education are their priorities — Mr. Speaker, when you look, as the member from Moose Jaw South has indicated, when you look at their actions, their actions don't run in parallel to the words that they use. They say one thing before an election; they do an entirely different thing after the election.

Mr. Speaker, if I were not in this House, I would use another phraseology, but I have to, in this House, say that that simply means that they are dishonest with the people of this province. They are not being truthful, they are not being truthful.

We find, Mr. Speaker, that in the budgets presented by their various ministers of Finance since these people have been the government, there is less and less emphasis on health and education and social services for the individual family. Now they can portray it all they want, and they can take the budget and move one item from Social Services over to Health, and from Education over to Health, and say therefore we spend over a billion dollars. Mr. Speaker, that does not for any moment whatsoever fool the ordinary person out there. You can't fool a person out there that can't get into a hospital. And you say that . . . but we're spending \$1.2 billion.

Mr. Speaker, then the individual must either say no, you're not being honest with me, or hey, look at, if that is the case, then you are a very poor manager because if that's the way you're wasting my money, I want no part of it. But, Mr. Speaker, we know that both cases are probably true.

There is a lot of waste in this government. There's a lot of patronage in this government, but there's also a lot of mistruths or untruths in this government. And therefore when it comes to the ordinary family that is adversely affected by the policies of this government, they have a right, Mr. Speaker, to be very angry and frustrated and disappointed with this government, with this government.

Mr. Speaker, I will run through each as I go through my particular delivery this evening, and I have a lot that I want to make other members aware of again, in case some of them weren't in the House when I spoke some weeks ago on the wrong priorities. And I know the member from Rosthern is very anxious to know how they set one policy of universality for certain groups of people, but when it comes to families and senior citizens, then we have to have a cap put on and therefore they are not eligible.

Mr. Speaker, what am I referring to? Well I'm referring, of course, to the production loan program, for example. Lots of money, Mr. Speaker, for the production loan program for cabinet ministers so they don't have money for

families now, for education, social services and health — hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker . . . I took note in the Public Accounts, Mr. Speaker, I took note of the Public Accounts of 1986-87 — 1986-87 — this province paid to the Premier of this province, \$100,000 — just a few dollars less than \$100,000. And yet, Mr. Speaker, policies have been developed which say that the Premier should be subsidized, through the production loan program, by our senior citizens, that the Premier should be subsidized by those families who can't afford drugs, that the Premier should be subsidized by the students of this province whose bursaries have been cut by this government.

(2015)

But we're saying that the Premier can get a production loan program at 6 per cent, and these people are supposed to subsidize the Premier. Not only the Premier, but cabinet ministers are eligible also — cabinet ministers, who have been receiving well over \$90,000, have been paying . . . the people of this province have been paying to them well over \$90,000. They, Mr. Speaker, if they are farmers, are also eligible for the production loan program.

And the people of this province, the poor people who can't afford drugs, who now have to pay part of their drugs; the people, Mr. Speaker, who can't receive an education because there aren't sufficient spaces available in our technical schools the people, Mr. Speaker, who have been cut back very dramatically on social services — those very people, Mr. Speaker, many of them earning less than 5 or \$6,000 a year, those are the people who are being asked to subsidize the Premier of this province, who are being asked to subsidize cabinet ministers.

Mr. Speaker, some of these cabinet ministers, who I've said are receiving over \$100,000, as the Public Accounts show, but they, Mr. Speaker, are being subsidized through the production loan program.

**An Hon. Member:** — Same as you got.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — And the member opposite says, same as I got. Now I think in the last year that I was a cabinet minister, as the member from Rosthern pointed out the other day, the total amount that was paid to me was \$82,000. But there was no production loan program; there was no production loan program, so that people didn't have to subsidize me.

We though, Mr. Speaker, that there should be universal programs for health care. We didn't think that the people should have to pay for their drug program. But the member opposite says, well he agrees with . . . he thinks that the ordinary citizen should subsidize him on his production loan program if he took it out.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that that is wrong. The minister from Urban Affairs has indicated that, well we have the home improvement program, well . . . and many people took advantage of that. And I will admit that I took advantage of it. The members opposite said, well they wanted to create jobs. Well I was going to save some of the people

from having to leave this province, so I did take out the production . . . I took out the home improvement program and did benefit from it.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me say this to the members opposite: there would be lots of money in this province if you straightened out your priorities. As the member from Moose Jaw South indicated, your priorities are all wrong. Hundreds of millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars are going to the people who you give patronage jobs to — hundreds of millions of dollars.

Remai, for example — I'll give you a good example here — when he built his hotel here in Regina, you people had all the people already in T.C. Douglas building. So what you did is you moved the people out of T.C. Douglas building and moved them into the Renaissance, and paid and signed a contract, signed a contract with John Remai for \$12 million — \$12 million.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have no money for our senior citizens so that they can get their drugs. We have no money for the social recipients. We've got to cut back for those people. But, Mr. Speaker, we have no money for bursaries for our students. I say to the member opposite, look, you've got to get your priorities straightened out. You've got to straighten out your priorities.

Mr. Minister, or Mr. Member, I want to say to you that when I was the minister of Health, when I was the minister of Health, we had very few people on the waiting list — very few people on the waiting list. And I want to . . .

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — And I want to point out that I can't take credit, I can't take credit for a waiting list. Here is Dr. Doig — Dr. J.N. Doig said a hospital the size of City Hospital should have a waiting list of between 600 and 700 people. That is Dr. Doig; wasn't me. Dr. Doig said that there should be waiting list of 6 or 700 people. But, Mr. Speaker, in no way could anybody ever have imagined, could anybody ever have imagined that a government would allow the waiting list to get to 11,000 in the city of Saskatoon — 11,000 people, 11,000 people, Mr. Speaker, who can't get into the hospitals. Every day, Mr. Speaker, we have people phoning us, asking us, when can we get into the hospitals, when can we get in. And we have an uncaring Minister of Health, Minister of Health who says, but our budget has expanded. He's not being fair, he's not being honest. He's simply not being honest with the people of Saskatchewan.

And I refer the members opposite to the estimates of 1988-89. Had they, Mr. Speaker, moved some of this money over to . . . in the right priorities, we would have money for our families. But, Mr. Speaker, what did they do? They were deceitful with the people of Saskatchewan. They were dishonest.

In 1981-82, when we put forward our last budget, Mr. Speaker, continuing care was under Social Services, \$2.8 million. Northern health services, \$4.7 million, was under DNS (department of northern Saskatchewan). Payments to Saskatchewan Property Management

Corporation was under supply and services, \$12 million. Grants and allowances for ambulance services was under Urban Affairs, \$8.4 million. Grants and allowances for home care, \$24.4 million. Grants and allowances for special care, \$196 million, Mr. Speaker, Grants for special . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. There are several debates going on. And this, of course, occurs from time to time, but now I ask the hon. members to allow the member from Saskatoon South to continue.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, I know that the former minister of Health, the Minister of Public Participation, or privatization, or piratization — whatever you call him, Mr. Speaker — I know that he was the author, he was the author of some of these things; moving things over from other departments into the Department of Health to fool the people out there, to be deceitful with the people, to tell the people now we're spending \$1.2 billion when they have moved \$253 million from other departments — \$253 million of programs that were in other departments, they now put in the Department of Health, and then they say, now we're spending \$1.2 billion.

Mr. Speaker, if they had moved all of the Department of Social Services into Health, couldn't they really have bragged to the people? Now they could have said, well we're spending \$2 billion in health by putting all of those programs under Health. What a foolish way of trying to deceive the people of this province. What a foolish way of doing it. Is it any wonder that this government doesn't have any credibility at all? I don't think it has any credibility left.

If the members opposite, if the members opposite were concerned about our families in Saskatchewan, they would see to it that education and social services and health received the priorities that it deserves. But no, Mr. Speaker, they are an insensitive government. They are a government . . . they are really what somebody calls a "wrecking crew." They are a wrecking crew which wrecks things, and then they want to get the patchworks back together and say, now we're going to patch it up again. We saw that, Mr. Speaker, in the drug program. They destroyed virtually the drug program, and then the Minister of Health says, well now we have to patch this thing up again, so we're going to have a committee set up that will listen to the urgent needs of people out there. They wouldn't have had to do that, they wouldn't have had to do that if they had left a good program alone.

Mr. Speaker, we saw the same thing with the dental program. What they did with the dental program affected children of many families in this province. They destroyed the best dental program in all of North America, maybe in all of the world. Those aren't my comments; those are the comments of Dr. Ambrose who took a survey, or did a survey of the dental program and made that particular statement that it was an excellent program.

Why then, Mr. Speaker, do we have this government attack the basic programs of medicare and

hospitalization? Mr. Speaker, we can only come to the conclusion that they are opposed to the principles of medicare and hospitalization. They've never accepted them and they never will. And they want to replace this health care program with a privatization program where we have a two-tiered system: one for the wealthy and one for the poor. We don't accept that, Mr. Speaker, we never have and we never will.

Mr. Speaker, when I was the minister of Health in 1979 to 1982, and when the Clark government was the federal government in Ottawa, Emmett Hall was commissioned to do a study of medicare and hospitalization. I remember well, Mr. Speaker, in one of our meetings, and I had to fight — I had to fight the other ministers of Health who refused, who refused to accept the document brought forward by Emmett Hall. Emmett Hall reiterated again that the four principles of medicare are sacrosanct; they are not to be touched. I remember well the other ministers attacking — attacking — attacking Emmett Hall on his stand on the four principles of medicare.

For the former minister of Health I want to reiterate: accessibility is one of those principles. We don't need — we don't need — we don't need a task force set up to again examine the principle of accessibility.

Mr. Speaker, I see where the Minister of Public Participation is jabbering again from his seat. That's about the only time . . . that's the only time we hear him speak, unless he gets up in the House and is defending privatization and the big corporations. It's the only time he gets up in the House nowadays. That because, Mr. Speaker, he can't, in his own conscience, he can't in his own conscience defend the principles of medicare which are a protection of the families in this province.

Mr. Speaker, any government, any government that attacks the principles of medicare as this government has done over the last six or seven years — the principle of accessibility, the principle of comprehensibility, and the principle of publicly funded health care — does it at its own peril. And I want to say to the minister opposite . . . I want to say to the minister opposite that you have not supported either when you were the minister of Health because you let the waiting lists in the province climb up and up and up so that people didn't have accessibility. You didn't support the principles of medicare.

And, Mr. Speaker, that member opposite can say all he wants from his desk, but the people in the province know, the people in the province know that he does not support those principles. He doesn't support them because his actions spoke much louder than his words when he was the minister of Health.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, they are taking away from the families of this province a right to medicare and hospitalization. And if you look at the statement made by the Premier of the province today, when he announced the task force, one of the things that the task force is going to look into is accessibility — accessibility. Mr. Speaker, why? Why must a task force even look into accessibility unless the members opposite realize that there isn't equal accessibility for all individuals in this province, if they must now believe that people don't have equal access to

hospitals?

Now we're going to look at that principle. I say to the members opposite, this country has accepted that principle; no one needs to look at it. Everyone, no matter whether you're rich or whether you're poor, whether you come from a poor family or a rich family, the principle of accessibility is equal for all people. And if you start questioning that particular principle of accessibility, you are attacking the very foundation of medicare, which we accepted in this country in 1962; we accepted it again in the early '80s; and we don't need to have a task force to look at that accessibility. That principle has been enshrined and we don't need to look at that.

(2030)

Mr. Speaker, many families in this province simply haven't got access to hospitals. They don't have access to hospitals because of underfunding of hospitals in our major cities, which are our base hospitals where much of the more complicated surgery is being done. We have, in the city of Saskatoon now, I think 9,000, close to 10,000 people on the waiting list. It was close to 12,000 a few months ago. And to the credit of this government, they have reduced it.

But, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly the same thing as . . . Let me use the parallel of a husband beating his wife, and when he stops, the wife is supposed to be thankful. How can we praise this government for creating a waiting list of over 12,000 people in Saskatoon, and now having reduced it to little more over 9,000?

And they expect us to praise them for that effort. That is ludicrous. It simply means that you people have not given hospitals and medicare and health the top priority that it always has had in this province — not just under our government, but under all other governments.

I say to the members opposite that you can't attack. You can't attack programs of health — the drug program, the dental program, our hospitals and our doctors — as the present Minister of Health has done, and say that you are committed to the principles of medicare, which are paramount to the welfare of the ordinary families in this province. When you start attacking those, and then you want to amend it — or then you want to mend it, by the way — by setting up a task force, don't expect that people should pat you on the back.

You have taken medicare and hospitalization to the point where people are questioning whether or not public hospitalization and medicare is the best way of delivering health care service. And I think that has been your goal, that has been your objective — to have people question the very principles of medicare and hospitalization. That's what you've done.

I say to the members opposite, for that, you stand condemned. And the people in this province have spoken in the two by-elections in Elphinstone and in Saskatchewan East, and they will speak again at the first opportunity they have. They will let you know that your priorities are wrong, that you can't spend all that money on patronage and on the big, multinational corporations and forsake

the ordinary families in this province.

You've done that in health; now you're trying to redeem yourself by setting up a task force. That task force would not be necessary had you given the emphasis on health care the way you should have given it.

But now, as I said, you're trying to redeem yourself. And it's very convenient. I read the Premier's notes on it, that they will report in the fall of 1989, the fall of 1989, just before the next general election so that they can make some more promises about the task force, and that they are committed to the principles of health care, and that they will make sure that the families are protected. But I don't believe that the people will be conned again.

I think you've had your fair turn at proving that you support the principles of medicare. You haven't; you've shown your true colours. And I say to the members opposite: you have made your commitment, not to medicare but to individuals who really don't need your support — the rich, the well off, the people who really don't even make their residence in this province.

You've committed large sums of money to individuals and corporations outside this province. I say to the members opposite that if you had straightened out your priorities from 1982 on there would have been lots of money today in health, in education, and in social services for the ordinary families in this province. There would have been lots of money. You gave away \$1.7 billion to the oil companies. That money today and over the years could have been used for the individuals or our families in Saskatchewan. But no, you didn't.

What you have done is, Mr. Speaker, not only have they reduced the programs of health and social services and education, but they've reduced the income that ordinary citizens have, would have had if they had not increased taxes. But they increase the taxes and in that avenue have taken money away from individual families. They have taken away money through their increase in income tax so that the people don't have money for drugs. They've taken money away by increasing the flat tax so that our senior citizens can't pay for their drugs. They have increased, Mr. Speaker, almost any tax there is on the ordinary citizen, in so that these people who are already so hard done by because of the devastation of the drug program and the elimination of the dental program. Even when it comes to the take-home pay, this government had their hands in the other pocket by increasing taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I say that that is an insensitive government. That is an uncaring government. That is a government that shows absolutely no compassion — no compassion for the ordinary citizens in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the members opposite, and again these are not my — these are not my works; these are words that others have spoken. Mr. Speaker, not only did they do away with those programs, but in a way they dealt with the members who were working for this government at that time. There was not even a caring attitude at that time. And here's the headline: "Assistants herded in to get news." They were simply taken out of their offices, herded into the room, and told them they

were dismissed — absolutely no compassion for the individual. Not only did they destroy the program that served these individuals and their families, but there was no sensitivity of how they went about taking away those jobs.

Mr. Speaker, the present Minister of Health claims — and I think I have disproved this government's contention — that they've substantially increased the health budget since 1982. All they've done is simply shifted 253 millions of programs from other departments into the Department of Health, and then they say they've increased the Department of Health.

But the present Minister of Health believes that the health care programs are too exorbitant, and he says . . . and he claims that people are abusing the system. I say to the present Minister of Health, that was exactly the same thing that the Thatcher government had in mind — that they were abusing the system. The ordinary family is abusing the system. And I couldn't believe it when the member from Kelvington, earlier this evening, was accusing the senior citizens because they were going to the doctors for their drugs — that they were drug abusers — that they were drug dealers. He didn't distinguish. He said that because there were free drugs.

**Mr. Speaker:** — What is the point of order?

**Mr. Hopfner:** — The member from Saskatoon South knows well . . . if you would research Hansard to note that my colleague, the member from Kelvington, did not indicate for one moment that the senior citizens were drug pushers or they misused drugs or anything like that. He was referring to the articles that have been appearing in the newspapers that were definitely proven by RCMP investigation and charges that there were from the streets on this drug abuse.

**Mr. Speaker:** — I've listened to the issue raised by the hon. member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster. It seems to me that his point of order revolves around a dispute of the facts between members, therefore it is not a point of order well taken. The debate continues.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, this is not a common occurrence from the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster, but we can excuse him. This is only his second term in the House. He doesn't understand the rules, and so I would excuse him from not knowing that that is simply a debatable point.

Mr. Speaker, I heard very clearly the member from Kelvington stating that people were abusing the drug program. He did not distinguish between the young and the old; he simply said people were abusing the drug program. I have to surmise, Mr. Speaker, that because senior citizens were also getting their drugs free, that he is saying that the senior citizens became drug abusers. Therefore, this government, this government had to take steps to stop the senior citizens from abusing the drugs that they were getting under prescription drugs. Now what a foolhardish argument. What a stupid argument by this government.

Mr. Speaker, to say that senior citizens who need their

drugs and who are prescribed drugs by their doctors are drug abusers is an insult to seniors who built this province — simply an insult to the seniors. And I say to the members opposite that, look at, you aren't the originators who feel that health care is being abused. Ross Thatcher thought that health care was being abused and he was accusing ordinary families, also, that they were abusing hospitalization and medicare, and therefore felt that there should be a user fee, a deterrent fee. But look back at the philosophy and ideology of Ross Thatcher. There was no more conservative individual than Ross Thatcher. He would have fitted in very well with the members opposite. And the members opposite felt that there was an abuse of the dental program, that there was an abuse of the drug program, by our ordinary families and therefore they took away a very valuable service from those ordinary members in this province.

And I say to the members opposite, shame on you! Shame on you when you don't care if there is abuse by others in this province. You gave \$21 million to Pocklington to set up a plant in North Battleford. But what do you do when Pocklington shuts down a plant here in Regina and eliminates 13 people of their jobs? Not one word is said. But Mr. Pocklington, who, when he ran for the leadership of the Conservative Party, said it was time that we got away from the public trough, was the first one at the public trough when you people offered him grants to build a meat packing plant in North Battleford — the first one at the public trough. And yet, Mr. Speaker, there is no money for the ordinary family. Money for Pocklington, money for Weyerhaeuser, but no money for education, social services, and health for the ordinary citizen of this province.

We in this province are the second highest taxed province in all of Canada. That has come about since these people opposite have been the government. They are taking money, they are taking away programs, Mr. Speaker, on the one hand, and they're taking away the income from people through taxation on the other.

Mr. Speaker, let me turn for a moment now to education. And here again, Mr. Speaker, these aren't my words. These are words by people who are the practitioners out in the education field, who are very concerned about the quality of education, the type of education that we can offer our children, so that they can adequately go into the 21st century. But what has happened? What has happened under this government in education?

Mr. Speaker, in education we find that under the Tories since 1982, under the Tories since 1982 education grants, operating grants, simply have not kept up with inflation. From 1984-85 on inflation, Mr. Speaker, has gone up by 35 per cent. Inflation has gone up by 35 per cent and yet operation grants have gone up by about 23 per cent — a 10, 11, or 12 per cent decrease when it comes to operating grants as opposed to inflation rate.

And Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, I see the Minister of Environment wants to get into this. He's got a tough enough time, I think, explaining as to why he allows the Rafferty-Alameda dam to go ahead without a blessing from the federal government and abusing his own rules and laws. And now he wants to

chirp from his seat. If he wants to get into the debate, Mr. Speaker, he can do so later on.

(2045)

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, education has suffered. In the 1970s, when you take the property improvement grant into consideration, which was around \$80 million — which by the way these people took away from the ordinary families and our senior citizens — \$80 million of property improvement grants which were paid out to the ordinary citizen and the small business person. These people when they came into power cancelled it — \$80 million. When you take that into consideration, Mr. Speaker, the province of Saskatchewan, under the Blakeney government, was paying over 70 per cent of all education costs — over 70 per cent.

What have we got today? The province is paying less than 50 per cent. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in the city of Saskatoon this government is only paying 33.9 per cent of the cost of education for the public school system. Is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, that property taxes for the ordinary citizens have gone up so dramatically? Again another burden on the ordinary family — no support from this government for those people, Mr. Speaker, who already in many instances have to go to the food banks in order to get their food. Many senior citizens who simply can't afford to get their drugs or food have to make a choice.

But what does this government do? They decrease operating grants so that the school systems have to increase property taxes if they wish to offer the same quality of education that we've become accustomed to. And what does the Minister of Urban Affairs do? He criticizes the school boards. He criticizes the school boards for being wasteful, for being inefficient, for not keeping within, not keeping taxes down. But you criticized . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

The Minister of Urban Affairs can get into this debate. He, in Moose Jaw, criticized the school boards also, in addition to the alderpeople . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh yes, you did. The Minister of Urban Affairs can stand up whenever he wishes, if he's not already standing, and get into this debate.

Mr. Speaker, this government, when it comes to the ordinary citizens, the ordinary families, has no caring, has no sensitivity. Their priorities are all wrong. As I indicated before, lots of money for those who are well off — lots of money for the Pocklington, lots of money for the Schoenhals, lots of money for the George Hills, lots of money for cabinet ministers through the productive loan program.

But, Mr. Speaker . . . lots of money through the home improvement program, too, of which I want to say to the urban minister, I took advantage of. I took advantage of that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, you don't have to lead me off to it. In fact you sent me my cheque before I even had any work done, which cheque I had to return to you — which cheque I returned to you, Mr. Minister, because I hadn't even started the work. How could you possibly send me the cheque?

An Hon. Member: — You were in a hurry.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — I was in no hurry. You show, simply, mismanagement. And, Mr. Speaker, that brings me to my other point. There probably would be lots of money for ordinary citizens, ordinary families, if we could simply run the government a little more efficient — if we could cut out some of the waste, if we could cut out some of the mismanagement.

I haven't got the auditor's report with me tonight but, Mr. Speaker, the auditor mentioned numerous, simply numerous occasions where money was spent which was not legally authorized by this Legislative Assembly — simply hundreds of thousands of dollars, hundreds of thousands of dollars. And when the auditor asks for further information, he's denied that information.

Mr. Speaker, we don't know just how much waste there is in this government, money which is now going on waste, could be spent in social services, in health, in education for the ordinary family. If this government simply became more accountable to this legislature, became more accountable to the ordinary citizens in this province.

There is too much waste. Not only do you have your priorities mixed up by hiring all those people on patronage appointments — the 200,000 to the George Hills, the 100,000s to Schoenhals, Dirks another 38,000, and we can go on and on and on. Hundreds of thousands of dollars — millions that would be available to the ordinary citizens in this province, where we could provide quality education programs.

Members opposite, members opposite say, oh well, the member is simply exaggerating, there have been no cut-backs in education. But, Mr. Speaker, that simply is not true. I have ample evidence, Mr. Speaker, of programs being cut back over and over and over. But before I get to those, Mr. Speaker, I want to just simply show that there is not adequate funding for school boards, and school boards then have to transfer that onto ordinary citizens, ordinary families by increasing their property tax.

You can't get away from saying, oh that's tough, as the Minister of Urban Affairs tries to do. The school boards aren't responsible. Well we have to, he says, but we as government have to cut back, we've got to pull in the purse strings.

Mr. Speaker, I've given ample evidence that simply is not true. And had they not received a transfer of payment of about \$180 million, I believe, last year from the federal government . . . Federal government bailed them out through transfer payment, but there isn't such a transfer payment for school boards and local governments. They have to count on the generosity of this government, and if that generosity isn't there to keep up with inflation or exceeds inflation, then the ordinary, the school boards and local governments, have no choice. They have no choice but to raise property taxes and that, Mr. Speaker, hurts the ordinary family. That means that there is less money for food, there is less money for education, there is less money for clothing, there is less money for entertainment.

The ordinary family is hit twice. They are hit by the increase in taxes by this government, and they are hit by the property tax increases by local government because this government simply doesn't supply sufficient money to school boards and city government.

Mr. Speaker, as I had indicated, this government simply has not, has not provided sufficient funds. And, Mr. Speaker, I have before me here the foundation operating grants, and there are numerous, numerous school divisions who received substantial decreases — substantial decreases. Here, for example, I have Lanigan, 17.29 per cent decrease. Here's another one, Moosomin, 13 per cent decrease; another one, Maple Creek, 11 point-some per cent decrease, and so on; Big Butte, 15 per cent decrease. Yes, there were some increases but, Mr. Speaker, there were a log of decreases. Here is one — Yorkton public, 23.39 per cent decrease. Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on and on.

I want to make the point, Mr. Speaker, that there were 41 per cent, 47 of 116 school divisions, who received decreases this year; and there were 71 out of that 116 who received less than inflation. How, Mr. Speaker, can we expect school boards to continue to provide quality education, to expand the school program, to provide for those children who have special needs so that families can be assisted? How can we expect school boards to provide all of those programs if this government, if this government doesn't at least provide operation grants which are at least as high as inflation? But, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, there are lots of people who do very well by this government — do very well. Here is a headline. It says, "Tory minister's air travel cost 1.5 million in 1986-87."

That, I believe, Mr. Speaker, comes from public accounts. That 1.5 . . . Or let's be generous and give them at least \$500,000 for coverage. There would have been \$1 million, \$1 million that could have gone to the ordinary family. It could have gone for special programs, special education programs for those children who need it, for the emotionally disturbed, the mentally retarded, the physically handicapped. Many of those programs, Mr. Speaker, have been cut because this government has simply not provided sufficient money.

And, Mr. Speaker, in a survey that we did last year, we asked school boards how they were affected by the cuts in education. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to go through all of those because there are hundreds of them, but there were substantial cut-backs in programs — programs, for example, for special education children; programs in computer program; programs in library, expansion of library so that children have sufficient books in order to expand the knowledge that they are to acquire. Fewer teachers were hired, class-rooms were doubled up. Classes, in some instances, Mr. Speaker . . . They taught grade 11 algebra, and you have some experience in this. How would you like to teach grade 11 algebra and grade 12 computer science combined — it would be a pretty hard task — and do a good job? Pretty tough to do.

And that is not uncommon, Mr. Speaker. That has happened time and time again because the school boards out there want to safeguard their schools, they want to

keep the school at the local level, and the only way that they can do it is to combine classes, decrease the number of teachers, increase the teacher-pupil ratio. And, Mr. Speaker, that does not speak well for the quality of education in this province.

The member from Yorkton . . . I'm surprised that the member from Yorkton hasn't got up in this House and asked some questions about the Minister of Education, as to why in his own city the public school grants, operating grants, went down over 23 per cent. Because the people from Yorkton have talked to me about it, and they want to know. They want to know why it has gone down to that extent, but not one word from the member from Yorkton, not one word.

And when I speak to them and I say, well why don't you meet with your member, they simply say, well we can meet with him because he doesn't come around any more.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, lots of money for certain people. And as I indicated in the estimates in Education again, money that could have gone for programs, could have gone for families, was spent on the Minister of Education's own office, his own office.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I was the minister of Health in 1982, about \$9,000 was spent a month on my personal staff. Today in the minister's office over \$19,000 is spent per month — Mr. Speaker, almost 100 per cent increase. Did the ordinary citizen out there get a 100 per cent increase? Did school boards get a 100 per cent increase? Did local governments get a 100 per cent increase? Did senior citizens get a 100 per cent increase? No, Mr. Speaker — no money for those people, not enough money for school boards, not enough money for senior citizens, and in effect, Mr. Speaker, we cut programs. We add additional burdens to our senior citizens by increasing . . . or decreasing the availability of drugs for senior citizens and asking them that they must pay a certain amount.

But, Mr. Speaker, for cabinet ministers, as I indicated before, lots of money. Lots of money in travel — \$1.5 million. Minister of Education, office increased over 100 per cent over what they were when I was the minister.

(2100)

Mr. Speaker, production loan program, universal program so that cabinet ministers and the Premier can be subsidized by senior citizens and by students whose bursary programs have been cut. Mr. Speaker, in 1982, when we left the government, a student took about \$2,600 in loan and the rest was bursary. Today, you've got to take out close to \$6,000 in loans before any bursary will apply, so that a student who goes to university for five or six years is going to have an accumulated debt of 25 to \$30,000, thanks to the generosity of this government. Thanks to the generosity of this government, they are going to be stuck with huge debt.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but no opportunities for jobs. As the member from Moose Jaw South indicated earlier this evening, about 9,000 people, net, left this province



last year. The cream of our crop is leaving this province because there are no jobs available here. They've got to go to Alberta or Ontario or some other place, Mr. Speaker, in order to find a job. We will educate them here, but they will have to work somewhere else because no jobs are provided.

Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, this government is insensitive; this government is uncaring; this government has its priorities all mixed up. If it would straighten out those priorities, if it would tax those companies that make their money here in this province, if they would tax those companies who have made record profits, there would be ample money available. We wouldn't have to have that task force on health care, because people would have access to hospitals. We wouldn't have over 9,000 or 10,000 people on the waiting list in Saskatoon. They would have ample access to hospitals.

But, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't make any difference how many people voice their opposition to this government. They are set on a course on which they will not turn back. They want to privatize almost everything that is profitable in this province, profits which we could use for health and education and social services. And they want to privatize those and give them to the multinationals like Weyerhaeuser. There again, Mr. Speaker, if the pulp mill was in our possession today, this year alone, we would have over \$88 million in profits going to the coffers of this province. But instead, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite brag about how Weyerhaeuser gave us \$30 million this year. But Weyerhaeuser walked away, all the way to the bank in the United States with \$58 million of our money.

These are the financial wizards, the members opposite. They are the business people — so they say they are. I hear quite often the member from or the Urban Affairs minister saying, you know nothing about business, but I do. I have been in business, he says. He is the kind of guy, he is the kind of guy that would say to you hey, look at, I know how you can make a quick buck. I'll sell you this pulp mill. And, you know, if I kept it, I could make 88 million, but if I give it to you I'll make 30 million — that's a good deal for me. That's the kind of deal that he would make, because he was part of cabinet that made that deal. He was part of that cabinet that gave away, gave away profits of \$88 million and got 30 million and then says we've got to be thankful. Fifty-eight million dollars, Mr. Speaker, that would have been here for health, for education and social services for our families, for our kids.

That, Mr. Speaker, is where this government is heartless, this government is uncaring, and it's insensitive. I say to the members opposite that this will come back to haunt you. It already has, as is shown, for example, in the Saskatoon Eastview by-election and in Elphinstone. And I say to the member from Bengough-Milestone, you're next, you're next. Just put your seat on the line and we'll see what happens.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have shown amply why I support the motion that was put forward by the member from Moose Jaw South, which clearly indicates that when it comes to the ordinary family in this province, particularly as it

relates to health, to education, and social services, this government has failed miserably. They simply have not provided adequate funds. They have forced people to go to food banks. They have forced people to leave this province. They have forced people to go begging. They have forced people to go without their drugs. And they have the audacity, Mr. Speaker, the audacity to say that people who go for prescription drugs are drug abusers, including senior citizens.

And they say to the people . . . They say to local governments and school boards, because we don't provide you with operating grants that are at least in keeping with inflation, you are inefficient . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, there come the . . . Oh, I knew the member from Mayfair . . . You know the member from Mayfair, the only time, Mr. Speaker, the only time the member from Mayfair speaks is when he chirps from his desk. But he never once, Mr. Speaker, he never once has defended, never once has he defended the city of Saskatoon and the people of Mayfair. Not once has he defended them, not once.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Not once, Mr. Speaker, has he defended the people of Saskatoon. Every time the government cuts money for school boards, every time the government cuts money for school boards the member from Mayfair praises and cheers the government. Every time the government cuts a grant to the city of Saskatoon, there is the member chirping from his seat, supporting the government — every time. When they changed the drug plan, where was the member from Mayfair? Cheering on the government. When they're changing the ward system, where's the member from Mayfair? Cheering on the government.

I say to the member opposite, the member from Mayfair, support the families of Saskatoon. Do your bit to decrease those waiting lists in Saskatoon. You should be ashamed of yourself, as a cabinet minister, to say that you support about 10,000 people on the waiting list. Where are you? Where are you in cabinet? Does your voice mean nothing? Or do you also, from your chair in the cabinet, do a little bit of chirping here and there but not put forward, put forward any logical arguments and cogent arguments so that your cabinet ministers would accept some of your arguments and defend the people of Saskatoon?

Maybe, Mr. Minister, if you came out supporting families, we wouldn't have to have motions like this put forward. But I'm saying to the member opposite, you can support your colleagues all you want, but I'm going to see to it that the people in Mayfair know exactly how you don't defend the people of Saskatoon or the welfare of the citizens in Mayfair.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, I do want to say that I've been very pleased to be able to participate in this debate, to show very clearly how over the last six years the priorities of this government have been all wrong. It is not for a lack of funds that the ordinary families do not get adequate remuneration from this government. The reason the

ordinary family is suffering is because it is a deliberate attempt of this government, deliberate policies to take away programs that benefit ordinary citizens. The dental program, the drug program, the beds for our city hospitals in Saskatoon so we have huge waiting lists, increased taxes, not enough money for school boards so programs have to be cut — all of those, Mr. Speaker, are deliberate decisions and for that, Mr. Speaker, this government stands condemned. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's been some hour and a half now that we've been listening to the NDP rhetoric in regards to families. Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric that we've heard here tonight could probably choke an elephant and that's not from the peanut he's eaten either.

I'd like to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the member from Moose Jaw South started this debate by making some accusations about this government and about their spending priorities.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today as a member of the Cut Knife-Lloydminster constituency, and I stand proud to represent those people, and I stand proud to be part of this government. When I look at the spending priorities of this government, Mr. Speaker, I would like to give you some of the history and some of the facts that this government has done towards health care in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I go back into 1982, 1981, when I was first running to become a member of this legislature. The member from Saskatoon South was then the minister of Health. Well, Mr. Speaker, I remember well that every time there was an election near in our riding, there was a promise in the city of Lloydminster that there would be a magnificent hospital built for the city of Lloydminster and surrounding area. Mr. Speaker, for 18 years they'd been promised that hospital in Lloydminster, and for 18 years it was never built under an NDP government. Mr. Speaker, that hospital has been announced, delivered, and is now being used under the present PC Premier Grant Devine's government. Mr. Speaker, my constituency . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. I realize that hon. members in their enthusiasm sometimes forget themselves a member and mention hon. members' names, and I will give the hon. member the benefit of the doubt. However I do remind him it's not acceptable.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — I understand that, Mr. Minister, but I was trying to get the NDP's attention so that they'd listen to this — I'm glad they're listening. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I abide by your ruling. But I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the then minister of Health under the NDP never delivered, never delivered that hospital in Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, for years — I want to go a list with you, Mr. Speaker — for years the community of Maidstone was after a new hospital, and for years that hospital had been promised for Maidstone under the NDP administration — for years, around elections. And, Mr. Speaker, after the

election was over, like Lloydminster, it was never delivered — never delivered. We delivered that hospital, a new facility. Mr. Speaker, the same goes for Cut Knife, Saskatchewan. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that when I'm looking at hospitals for a particular region, the north-west region, when it was neglected under an administration under the NDP administration, I want to indicate my thanks to this government for its health support for my area.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about the dental program. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that I, as one member, have now got dental services in a rural community of Cut Knife, dental services, dental rural services in Cut Knife, dental rural services . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. Order. I believe the hon. member has the floor. I know this particular motion is generating a great deal of debate; there are many members wanting to speak; however, the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster now has the floor, and I ask the hon. members to allow him to speak.

(2115)

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I notice that, you know, they just don't want to listen. You know, we sat here listening to their rhetoric for an hour and a half, as I indicated, and they do not pay us the courtesy of being able to debate their resolution. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you that the dental services now are not only for school children but they're for middle-aged, they're for everyone from children right on through to senior citizens, and that dental services are in these communities; it's just not for the few school children.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, it was not nullifying dental services for rural Saskatchewan, it was enhancing it, it was expanding. That is what our government did. It expanded the dental services for rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I can go on about the aspect of the members opposite having their moratorium on the hospitals and nursing homes while our area was particularly hit hard by that. And when we lifted that moratorium that the then minister from Saskatoon South had, as he was Minister of Health, had on this province — as we were elected in 1982 and that moratorium was lifted, I can now announce to you, Mr. Speaker, as I've announced some time ago, that we've got our two nursing homes in Lloydminster and in Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at health care services I look at home care services. I look at . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . yes, the dental program, the drug program. I look at the all-round health care services for my particular area and, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that our constituency has been serviced very well by this government's actions as far as health care is related.

Mr. Speaker, when members have to stand in this Assembly and holler and yell, like the member from Saskatoon South, I just want to take this opportunity to warn the people of this province that those who yell and yell continually and yell, they want attention — attention,

Mr. Speaker, for only one purpose, to sell something that they themselves know is not, is untrue.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to those untruths here tonight and I want to indicate to you that if . . . a warning to the people out there in the province that if they're . . . it's like a wolf looking at this wounded little rabbit and they're going out and they're trying to use these . . . and I'll put it in the scenario of using the scare tactics on the people, on the seniors of this province, the children of this province and, Mr. Speaker, I would like those people to sit back and really think this out.

They try to scare seniors. They try to scare children in making them believe that our government is trying to dismantle the medicare in the province of Saskatchewan. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that my grandfather homesteaded in this province. And the member from Saskatoon South should well know; he's in some sort of way related to me, but I want to indicate to you that a lot of his close relations don't even support what he says in this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you also that he's about to get a little upset and stand on a point of order, so I probably . . .

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, a point of personal privilege. I deny that I am related to the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster. And I just want to make it clear to him that I am not related to him, unless he goes back by blood to Adam and Eve. I suppose we're all related that way. And I'd really like him to withdraw it because I'm not related to him.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The hon. member's point of privilege is not in fact a point of privilege, and the debate continues.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't say I was a direct relative, an in-about-round relative of his, and that is he's married to a relative of mine.

Mr. Speaker, I want indicate to you that that's just a typical reaction we get in this legislature. You know, he's simply trying to always, always twist, you know, the truth. I wish I could twist the truth, you know.

Mr. Speaker, the ignorance of the member from Saskatoon South is beginning to really become more apparent in this Assembly, and I want to indicate to you that that does have a problem on the welfare and the social well-being of the people in the province of Saskatchewan. I hope that they never re-elect this individual.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you, on this particular resolution that has been brought to this Assembly, they've attacked this government for lack of health care initiatives. I indicated to you all the initiatives, or just a portion of the initiatives, but a whole lot of all the programs that we have contributed out here in this

province and what we've . . . a few of them we've received in our riding. And I want to indicate to you that we suffered none. And I was just trying to get to the point where my riding does appreciate those particular services when I was so rudely interrupted.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about spending, spending priorities, let's talk about the spending priorities then. Mr. Speaker, we ware, and when we came to power in 1982, we were deciding we were going to be an open government, and an open government we are. We decided we were going to be open for business, and open for business we are. Mr. Speaker, we decided we were going to diversify this economy, and diversifying we are. Mr. Speaker, when I talk about open for business, open government, diversifying, I'm talking about one thing, Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about creating, creating a healthy, a healthy atmosphere.

Yes, the members opposite don't like what they're hearing, but the people of Saskatchewan will judge that. They'll judge that in the next election again, as they have in 1986. But, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to jobs, job creations, this government has . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. I realize that hon. members rise to speak on resolutions, and certainly it's happened before tonight with a couple of other speakers, they do have a great deal of information they would like to impart to the House; however, I'd just like to draw it to their attention that their remarks must relate to the resolution under discussion.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — I agree with your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I was just going to wrap it in to saying how this job creation ties into the well-being and helps pay for the costs of the health care and education and the social programs that we received in this province.

Mr. Speaker, there has never, in the entirety of this province, ever been as many people in the employment area employed in the province of Saskatchewan as there is today. And, Mr. Speaker, those taxes collected, those taxes collected go for health, education, and social services.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite say I'm off the topic. Well I don't agree. I agree with this, **Mr. Speaker:** — I agree that we must create an atmosphere in this province that allows people to be educated in our schools and our universities. Mr. Speaker, they must have jobs to go to. The education is nothing if we can't deliver on jobs, and there's where the two tie in. And, Mr. Speaker, I just want to indicate to you that I apologize to no one in this province for the fact that we have failed or not continually going in that particular direction.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Moose Jaw South indicated while he was speaking that what you need in hard times is good managers. Well, Mr. Speaker, the NDP were in government in the good times. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you that I would have had, as a government member here today, I would have had about \$600 million in my pocket here, as a government, to be able to spend on health care facilities and schools and social programs. But no, Mr. Speaker, in the good times they decided to go

out and buy a uranium mine. Mr. Speaker, those kind of dollars were not left in the government coffers for us to be able to spend on those particular types of service.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I talk about the fact of the potash mine, the potash industry. That NDP administration in those days went out and bought a whole bunch of potash mines, and they are saying how good that was going to be for Saskatchewan, and how it was going to build schools and hospitals and services social programs. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan now know today that that is not fact. In fact, Mr. Speaker, after the NDP spending \$600 million on uranium mines instead of building hospitals and nursing homes and schools, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, if they ever become government at some day tomorrow, there's going to be a closure of that uranium mine — 600 million investment and a closure, so we're out that kind of money, plus the interest where they went out of the country to borrow the money. The same with the potash industry, the interest, the high interest rates that we were paying out of country, borrowed from the New York exchange for all these various purchases, building their family of Crown corporations that were not servicing anybody in this province, Mr. Speaker. And there was a lack of education and hospital facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you that when they talk about lack of priorities for families, Mr. Speaker, I ask you where . . . I ask you, Mr. Speaker, where were the NDP when the interest rates sky-rocketed, where the pressures were put on the families in this province?

Mr. Speaker, there was not any particular type of need for the way our families in the province of Saskatchewan were treated when the NDP were . . . in the last two years of the NDP administration. They put unnecessary hardships on the people of this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that if those people had that money in their back pocket, they'd be only more than willing to be able to help look after maybe a neighbour of theirs or part of their own family or something like that. Mr. Speaker, they don't particularly have that kind of thing.

The NDP taxed . . . estate taxes, had an estate tax put on, taxing the dead, Mr. Speaker, that's what that was. That's what they did for family people — taxed widows. Mr. Speaker . . . and they laugh. They sit there and they laugh. They're laughing so hard; they say, well that's dumb, you know; that's absolutely . . . and the member from Quill Lakes, the member from Quill Lakes is . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. Would the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster please . . . I'd just like to ask the hon. members to allow the member to proceed with his remarks, regardless of whether they agree or disagree, but I do think he has the floor. He does have the floor, and he does have the right to speak. Order, order. Order. Order, order.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, they chirp from their seats and say what if he doesn't make sense or something like that. Well, Mr. Speaker, that's fine, that's fine. But I'll tell you, I'll tell you something, Mr. Speaker, that when it comes time for a judgement, the NDP will find out.

Mr. Speaker, that unnecessary burden on the people when interest rates sky-rocketed, that put quite a drain on the family and the closeness of the family and the burden that it put on them. And when those people asked the NDP, when those people asked the NDP for help, the NDP turned their back on them. We didn't, Mr. Speaker. We have come out, and we have come out with programs for the farmers, we've come out with programs to help the farmers so they could send their children, so they wouldn't have to move out of the province and send their . . .

(2130)

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order. I just once more would like to remind the hon. member to relate his remarks to the topic. And I know he has a great deal he wishes to share but . . . and he may do that if he can relate them to the resolution being discussed.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to argue with your ruling. The thing is, is it does relate to it on the aspect of . . . I was just trying to say is that the farm family, the individual couldn't afford to send their children to school any longer because of these high interest burden on them and the NDP had turned their back on them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate just a few things that we've done as a government for the families and towards the welfare and benefit towards the family in Saskatchewan.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that we have this mortgage interest protection for all citizens in the province of Saskatchewan. If interest rates sky-rocket, their homes are protected through this mortgage interest protection program that we have.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to indicate to you that we have a first-time Saskatchewan pension plan that allows everyone in this program that security . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, it's family welfare. It's a family looking after the family welfare, and the NDP don't agree, but it is a family welfare. It's for the welfare of all families in the province of Saskatchewan. I mean, you're totally ridiculous, the member from Quill Lakes. If you want to speak, you get up and speak after I'm finished.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that the farm protection that we've brought about as a government is for the welfare of the Saskatchewan families here in the province of Saskatchewan. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that we've identified the freedom of language rights in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, that is for the welfare of the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to just touch on other things such as the provision for our young people and for the caring attitude our government has been trying to show to them by putting this drug and alcohol abuse centre near Yorkton, Saskatchewan, at Whitespruce. Mr. Speaker, that is the first, and I understand that this has been highly regarded right across this country, as of today, and there are a lot of provinces looking at being able to make use also of that facility, asking if they could possibly make use

of that facility as well as along with the Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that we've all heard the announcement today of our task force on health care. Well, Mr. Speaker, when I look at an individual such as Bishop Morand, I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that when the NDP were standing in this, and the Leader of the Opposition was speaking in this House earlier today belittling this committee, well, Mr. Speaker, to me it's a . . . when I look at a man such as Bishop Morand, I kind of have to . . . well, I'll let the people judge out there as to who they would actually like to see on a task force, the Leader of the Opposition or Bishop Morand.

**An Hon. Member:** — An easy choice.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Mr. Speaker, I agree, from my colleague here, it would be an easy choice, and I'm sure we all know who that is.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard about the one point the member from Saskatoon South, saying we as a government had given \$1.7 billion to the oil companies, and we didn't build hospitals or nursing homes or anything like this. Well, Mr. Speaker, I mean, the truth is in the pudding. Any person that is questioning that at all can come and read the public documents and study them or ask questions of them. And it can be pointed out to them that that was a direct untruth that was stated in this Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that when those people go out into my riding, where the oil industry is very much active and alive, that that's not what they're saying. They're trying to tell them, how can we give you more so you'll support us instead of them. That's what they're saying out there.

So, Mr. Speaker, when I hear that rhetoric, you know, and they say that we gave that kind of dollars away and didn't do . . . and are cutting back on this and that and everything else. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's again . . . I ask the people to be open-minded, and if they are questioning it, to ask for the information. And they don't have to get it from members of the opposition or government members. They can . . . it's all public documented, and they can go to the library and do their . . . ask their questions, research, or whatever it is, you know. And the members laugh. Sure they laugh, you know. But I'm indicating to . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. Why is the member on his feet? Point of order? What is your point of order?

**Mr. Solomon:** The point of order, Mr. Member, is that . . . or, Mr. Speaker, is that the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster is way off the topic, and I was wondering if you could just examine the record and ask him to get back on the topic, please.

**Mr. Speaker:** — I've listened to the hon. member's point of order, and as I indicated earlier, members should attempt to relate their remarks to the resolution under discussion. And I simply reiterate that. And I believe he's trying to do that and will do so again.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that the members opposite just don't want to hear truths, and it upsets them. They know full well that they've been way out in left field on this particular topic.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to again part of the particular conversation they were using with this resolution, and saying where they . . . instead of this government going on patronage, instead of spending it on health care. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that I have this book and it's just full of pages, pages, pages, and names of past MLAs, NDP MLAs and candidates that the members opposite have done when they were government. And I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that any administration would sooner have their own people in particular places than having opposition people in particular places.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say to the member opposite that they ought to not sweep the dirt under their rug, because there is a lot of it there already, and there will be quite a lot more.

Mr. Speaker, our government has diversified in this province, and we've created an atmosphere in this province where it is generated and there was a spin-off within many service sectors throughout this province. And through that, Mr. Speaker, a great deal of income tax has been created. And that tax, Mr. Speaker, has built us a strong base, and it's building a stronger base every day.

Mr. Speaker, I don't quarrel with the fact that no one would like to see a lot more happening. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you that I know of a lot more families in this province that have stayed together and are living together in a closer community. They're not spread out throughout the U.S. or the rest of Canada or wherever. Mr. Speaker, these people are able to stay home and find this employment.

Mr. Speaker, now we don't close the borders for anybody; people get educated here, and they want to go and work somewhere else, in some other province, we wish them well. We'd like to welcome them back to Saskatchewan whenever they so please.

But I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, when I hear about the member from Saskatoon South talking about all these huge waiting lists, I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that there are waiting lists, and there's no doubt about it, and we all like to see less. But, Mr. Speaker, you know as well as I do it's just not government.

I want to indicate to the people out there that the medical doctors, the specialists, they all gather in larger centres, and these are the people that perform the operations. And, Mr. Speaker, we all know in rural Saskatchewan that you have to have this speciality, and you have to be able to have the facilities to perform certain types of operations. And basically, Mr. Speaker, if you can't . . . if the people don't want to go to the rural part of the province that are allowed to perform these types of services by the medical association, well, Mr. Speaker, my hands as an elected member are tied. I have absolutely no control over a particular doctor in going to force him to go to Cut Knife, Saskatchewan or Maidstone,

Saskatchewan if he's not going to want to go.

I do however, and I would appreciate the medical association's attention to this particular issue. I don't particularly think that it is pleasing to me or to any of my constituents that they have to travel miles and miles and miles, and then spend days and days and days in a hospital bed in a strange community. It's nice to be able to have those services in rural Saskatchewan. And I think with the co-operation of our Minister of Health and all people here, I think those services will eventually take place.

Mr. Speaker, it does take a lot of time to get people interested maybe, if that's the word, to get them out into the rural community. Some people may figure it's a little isolated or something like that, and definitely I would believe it's harder on either the husband or the wife opposite of whoever the doctor is in that particular gender. But I would like . . . It would probably be harder on them because of the fact that the hours are basically spread out over a longer period, and there's only limited doctors able to service the particular population to make it worth while.

But, Mr. Speaker, these are kinds of things that people in rural Saskatchewan do understand. Rural Saskatchewan people are unique to — are what I feel — are unique to that situation. They understand that we are trying; they understand that the government costs cannot go on.

The member opposite, he talked about the costs of Health minister's office and staff, and he says, well it was \$9,000 when he was minister. Well, Mr. Speaker, probably if he had done anything, it would have been double; but if he's just sitting there doing nothing, he's paying nobody, and so I think he probably was overbudgeted at \$9,000.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you that it's the same if you go back 10 years ago, if you look at a farm in relation to health care, and it's services and stuff like that. And you being a farmer as well, Mr. Speaker, you can relate to the costs of farming 10 years ago as to the cost of . . . and the administration of that farming 10 years ago as you can to the cost of administration of health today.

I think probably when you look at the fact of health care, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the member from Saskatoon South that when he was the minister of Health, and it was I his intellectual experience to have had to order the nurses back to work, he thought that was the best way and the only way, and it was really going to make hi a popular, hard-nosed minister.

(2145)

But, Mr. Speaker, the medical people, the nurses' association, they taught the minister a lesson. They ousted him. He says . . . well, I don't know too much about the rules here in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, but I want to indicate to him that because I've only been here two terms, Mr. Speaker, at least I haven't been turfed like that individual had been from a ministerial position, the minister of Health's position.

Mr. Speaker, those were the people, those were the

people that undermined these types of services in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you when we have . . . when we talk about medicare in this province, I want to indicate to you that it wasn't the NDP that brought medicare to the Province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, if they want to learn about the word "medicare," medicare was talked about probably back in the '30s by John Diefenbaker, if I remember well. And I'll tell you something, Mr. Speaker. It was John Diefenbaker that really put the kick on medicare in this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, you never saw or heard of John Diefenbaker running around trying to play some heroic individual, or become some heroic individual over this. Mr. Speaker, he did it for the well-being and the good of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, medicare belongs to no one. My grandfather helped, his grandfather helped, his grandfather helped, and, Mr. Speaker, they were not NDP at that time. They were not NDP at that time because there wasn't NDP at that time. Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that it was a mixture of all political parties that put medicare in this province, and, Mr. Speaker, as a private member, as an individual and as a Tory-thinking member, I want to indicate . . . and I promise this to the people of this province, that it would be over my dead body that there would be any real, other than any improvements to medicare, that there would be any destruction to the medicare system or program.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that we can only build on, and we're only wanting to build on our strengths, and I say this is one of our strengths. This is one of the great provinces to live in as far as medicare is concerned, and medical services are second to none right across this country or North America.

I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, I've sat in this Assembly and I've listened to the NDP trying to make a joke out of the types of services that are available to the people of this province. Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't find it a joke. I find them a joke. I find them a joke when they can sit in their chairs . . . and it's too bad the cameras can't be on them, Mr. Speaker, so the people, the real people out there in Saskatchewan can see them, see them clowning around.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that when the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that I am not at all in favour of this resolution. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that we could be spending the money, we could be spending the money that we're wasting on debating this resolution in doing something proper in the health care or education facilities or for some program for the well-being of the Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that I've probably bored a lot of people because of having to throw out a lot of this. I know a lot of the people out there realize what this government has done . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order. Order.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — I realize a lot of the people know what this government has done and are in appreciation of it.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would say that I will not be in support of any type of resolution. And I would like to now adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:50 p.m.