

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the legislature, 43 grade 6 students from St. Mark's School in Saskatoon. They're accompanied by their teachers Stewart Forrester and Ralph Dauk, and a chaperon Mr. Allegretto. I'll be joining them for pictures and refreshments later on, Mr. Speaker, but I'd like the House to welcome those students today.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure at this time, Mr. Speaker, to introduce to you and to other members of the legislature, some eight students, grade 9 students from the Lake Lenore High School, I'm advised, seated in the east gallery. They're accompanied by Mr. Wade Weseen, their teacher, and two other attendants, Mr. Syl Jasken and Mr. Frank Collins.

I certainly want to welcome the students to the Assembly. I hope they enjoy their visit here and that they have a safe trip back home.

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

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the rest of the Assembly, a group of 13 grade 5 students sitting in the east gallery from the St. Louis School in Patuanak.

Mr. Speaker, Patuanak is approximately 500 miles from Regina. And this group has travelled to Prince Albert last night and into Regina today and will be spending the next two days in Regina.

I want to welcome you here, along with their teacher Albert Clavelle, chaperons Marcie Dawatsare, Norbert Wolverine, and Mike Tcho. I'd like, Mr. Speaker, through you, to ask all members to welcome this group of students from Patuanak, and we hope that you have a good time in Regina and safe journey home.

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

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, some 33 young people from the constituency of Regina South that are sitting in your gallery. They are grades 7 and 8 students from St. Matthew School — that's a school in Whitmore Park in our southern area of the city. They are accompanied here today by their teacher Mr. Stan Crawford. Now Mr. Crawford happens to be an ex-Ram football player and a colleague of — or former colleague of — the Minister of Health, a team-mate on a team.

Hopefully they'll find their visit to this legislature both informational and educational. I look forward to meeting

with them a little bit later. I understand it might be out in the shade — maybe we could play football a little bit, or something. But we'll determine how they enjoyed their visit at that time. I ask all members to help me welcome them to this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member from Quill Lakes in welcoming our guests from Lake Lenore, Saskatchewan. I had the opportunity as a young fella to live in the community of Lake Lenore and to attend the school there. I took most of my education in Lake Lenore.

I also want to indicate to you that it is an aggressive community and . . .

**An Hon. Member:** Good Hopfners are still there.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Great Hopfner family there too, yes. And I'd also like to indicate that it is a very sports-minded community. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish these students well and especially in their examinations that are forthwith, and also wish them a great and happy summer.

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in the Assembly we have a privilege that we can all share. I am personally privileged to welcome nine distinguished gentlemen who are seated in your gallery. These are very special individuals who are the most recent recipients of Canada's highest national honours.

One has been invested to the Order of Canada; three to the Order of Military Merit; five have been recognized for their extraordinary bravery and courage.

Each of these individuals has performed outstanding service to the people of Saskatchewan and to their communities. They have shown, by example, that each of us can leave a meaningful mark on society if we pursue our goals with diligence and if we follow our hearts, whether that goal is community service, or dedication to the arts, or commitment to the welfare of our nation, our fellow citizens, or indeed an individual in peril.

The significant accomplishments and the selflessness of these individuals is a source of pride and satisfaction to each and every one of us in Saskatchewan, and indeed in Canada.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan I wish to extend my congratulations to each of the individuals. Your achievements and the honour you bring to Saskatchewan touch us all very deeply. The people of your communities, your province, and your country thank you indeed.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to pay tribute to these outstanding citizens, and I will leave the honour on introducing them to their own members of the legislature here in the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure and honour to join with the Premier and the other members of the Assembly in welcoming such a distinguished group of special guests to the legislature. This year's list of Saskatchewan people who have received national honours, such as the Order of Canada, the Order of Military Merit, and declarations for bravery is both long and very impressive, as the Premier has pointed out, and the people of our province have much of which to be proud.

I'm delighted to congratulate and pay tribute to this group of special Saskatchewan leaders on behalf of the official opposition.

Today we're giving special recognition to leaders in the arts, sports, and community service, as well as to some individuals who have literally risked life and limb to aid others. A great prophet once wrote, quote: "You give but little when you give of your possessions; it is when you give of yourself that you truly give." So true, Mr. Speaker, and so true of the dedicated, brave, and caring individuals that we honour today.

What warms our hearts is that while the individuals we honour here have proven themselves to be truly exceptional, in the larger sense they are so representative of Saskatchewan people, people who care about their families, who care about their neighbours and about their communities, people who do not hesitate to give of themselves in order to help others. This special Saskatchewan spirit makes our province a more caring, compassionate, and tolerant society.

The award winners we honour today are exceptional examples of what we all describe as the Saskatchewan spirit. To each of you I say, thank you. Thank you for all you've done, thank you for all that you will continue to do in the future, and thank you for giving all of us greater heights to which we can aspire. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Goodale:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am honoured indeed to have the opportunity to add some words of welcome and commendation in respect of our very distinguished guests in the legislature today. As Saskatchewanians, we all believe our province is a special place with a great many special people among our population. It has become one of our Saskatchewan traditions that this legislature sets aside a day like this one each year to pay tribute to those among us who have recently been singled out for special recognition, and who have received one of Canada's national honours.

This year we acknowledge a truly remarkable group, Mr. Speaker, a leading figure in Saskatchewan and Canadian theatre, three men of distinction in our military, a courageous police officer, and four citizens of great personal bravery. I doubt if this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, has ever before been graced by the presence, simultaneously, of a member of the Order of Canada, two members of the Order of Military Merit, an officer of the

Order of Military Merit, a recipient of the Star of Courage, and four recipients of the Medal of Bravery. They do us a great honour, Mr. Speaker, by being present with us today.

On behalf of myself and my party, I want to welcome them all to the Assembly this afternoon. We congratulate them for the national honours that have been bestowed upon them, and we commend them most especially, Mr. Speaker, for the distinguished service and conduct for which they have been decorated. All of Saskatchewan is proud indeed to honour these very special Saskatchewan people.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, Mr. Kenneth Kramer of Regina, Member of the Order of Canada.

Born in Edmonton, Mr. Speaker, Kenneth Kramer trained in England in the dramatic arts, specializing in theatre for children. He and his late wife, Sue, founded the Globe Theatre school company in Regina in 1966. Its success led to the establishment of the main stage theatre for adults in 1972. The Globe Theatre now serves many communities in Saskatchewan with live theatre for children and adults, and has achieved a national reputation for excellence.

As artistic director of the Globe, Kenneth Kramer is recognized as one of the leading figures in Canadian theatre. He was invested as a Member of the Order of Canada by Her Excellency the Governor General, in the Senate Chamber in Ottawa on May 6, 1988.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kenneth Kramer, Member of the Order of Canada.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and to the members of the Assembly, Captain Ernest Millward, Member of the Order of Military Merit.

Captain Millward has served 33 years in the Canadian forces, with postings in Ottawa, Alberta, France, Quebec, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Beginning as a non-commissioned member, he was commissioned from the ranks in 1971. Captain Millward is a physical education and recreational officer.

He has made significant contributions as a volunteer in the local community wherever he has served in the Canadian Armed Forces. He has twice been nominated for citizen of the year in Moose Jaw. Captain Millward is considered by his peers to be a model citizen and soldier. He was invested as a Member of the Order of Military Merit by Her Excellency the Governor General, in Ottawa on June 1, 1988.

Mr. Speaker, Captain Ernest Millward, Member of the Order of Military Merit.

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

**Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my great privilege to introduce to you, and through you to members of the House, Chief Warrant Officer Garry Orwick, Member of the Order of Military Merit.

Garry Orwick has had an outstanding record of service with the Canadian forces for 26 years. He joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1962 as a cook. He served seven years at sea on eight different ships, and later at two air force bases, a training base, and with the Canadian contingent in Vietnam.

He also worked at the 1978 Commonwealth Games in Edmonton and has helped the Alberta cadet league. Since coming to Canadian Forces Base, Moose Jaw, as base services officer in 1983, Chief Warrant Officer Orwick has completely rebuilt the catering organization to a level of excellence which is unsurpassed in Canada. And I, having dined at the base on a number of occasions, can attest to that.

Today, Mr. Speaker, Chief Warrant Officer Orwick is accompanied by his wife, Claudette, with whom I am sure he shares the honour. Chief Warrant Officer Orwick was invested as a member of the Order of Military Merit by Her Excellency the Governor General in Ottawa on June 1, 1988.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Chief Warrant Officer Garry Orwick, Member of the Order of Military Merit.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, Major Eric Vincent, Officer of the Order of Military Merit. Eric Vincent joined the communications reserve of the Canadian Forces in Saskatoon in 1976. He became a captain and commanding officer of 737 Communication Troop in 1978 and was promoted Major in 1981. Under his command, 737 Troop became an outstanding unit, winning awards for the best reserve unit in 1983 and 1985.

Major Vincent is also a lifelong volunteer in the St. John Ambulance. He is an expert marksman and a national hand-gun and pentathlon coach. He received a commendation from the chief of the defence staff for rescuing a man from a burning car in 1978.

In recognition of his distinguished service to the Canadian Forces reserves, Major Vincent was invested as an Officer of the Order of Military Merit by Her Excellency the Governor General on October 29, 1986.

Mr. Speaker, Major Eric Vincent, Officer of the Order of Military Merit.

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

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, Chad Ross Dunn, Medal of Bravery; Ross Daniel Dunn, Medal of Bravery; Constable A. Ross Lewis of the RCMP, Medal

of Bravery.

Mr. Speaker, on the morning of August 5, 1986, RCMP Constable Ross Lewis and his partner arrived at the scene of a fire in Big River to see flames and heavy smoke pouring from a shed. A neighbour, who informed them that an elderly man was inside, entered the building in an attempt to locate the victim. Driven back by the intense heat and thick smoke, he met Ross Dunn who, with his son Chad, had arrived in the meantime.

Constable Lewis and Ross Dunn, with Mr. Dunn in the lead, held hands and re-entered the shed, but again were forced to retreat. Joined by Chad Dunn, they immediately made a third attempt and discovered the severely burned and unconscious man in a rear corner of the building. Constable Lewis immediately applied mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and continued to do so while he and the victim were being transported to hospital. Unfortunately, the man later died from his injuries.

Constable Lewis, Mr. Chad Dunn, and Mr. Ross Dunn, are to be invested with the Medal of Bravery by Her Excellency the Governor General, in Ottawa on June 10, 1988.

Mr. Speaker, I give you Chad Ross Dunn, Medal of Bravery; Ross Daniel Dunn, Medal of Bravery; Constable A. Ross Lewis of the RCMP, Medal of Bravery.

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

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A few words about the community that the recipients that I'm going to introduce are from, Fond du Lac, which is a community on the north shore of Lake Athabasca, just 50 miles south of the Northwest Territories. They live in an isolated community, and I want to thank, through you, Mr. Speaker, the mining association of Saskatchewan who were good enough to pay for all the expenses to bring the two individuals here. And I would specifically like to thank Mr. Ralph Cheesman, of the Saskatchewan Mining Association, and Mr. Bernard Michel, the president of Amok Ltd.

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

**Mr. Thompson:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce, through you and to the Assembly, Mervin Louis Adam, Star of Courage. On September 26, 1986, Mervin Adam performed the daring rescue of two children from a burning house on the Fond du Lac Indian Reserve. Mr. Adam was helping to build a new house when one of his co-workers noticed smoke coming from the residence next door.

The men rushed over to investigate. After breaking in the rear door, Mr. Adam went inside to see if there were any occupants. He found a small boy badly burned near the front door and carried him outside to his waiting colleagues.

He re-entered, locating a little girl and her mother, unconscious in a back room. He picked the girl up and carried her outside, then entered the house a third time, this time to rescue the mother.

However, Mr. Speaker, he was overcome by the thick smoke and forced back outside. He was able to give instructions to two other men who managed to carry on his work and rescue the mother. Unfortunately, the little boy succumbed to his injuries, but the girl recovered after receiving extensive treatment.

Mr. Adam will be invested with the Star of Courage this afternoon by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

Mr. Speaker, Mervin Louis Adam, Star of Courage.

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

**Mr. Thompson:** — Mr. Speaker, I now want to introduce to you, and through you to the Assembly, Pierre Lidguerre, Medal of Bravery.

Pierre Lidguerre and John Pische rescued a woman from a burning house on the Fond du Lac Indian Reserve on September 26, 1986. Mr. Lidguerre had been helping to build a new house when one of his fellow workers spotted smoke coming from the residence next door.

The men went to investigate. They succeeded in breaking open the rear door of the house, and one man went inside through thick black smoke to see if there were any occupants. He emerged shortly afterwards carrying a badly burned small boy.

He entered a second time, rescued a little girl, then entered the house a third time to rescue the mother. However, Mr. Speaker, he was forced out by the overpowering smoke. By this time Mr. Pische had arrived on the scene, and he and Mr. Lidguerre entered, following the first man's instructions, lifted her up together, carried her outside before wrapping her in some drapes and rushing her to the reserve clinic.

Mr. Lidguerre and Mr. Pische are to be invested with the Medal of Bravery this afternoon by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

Mr. Pische, Mr. Speaker, and his wife, are expecting a child in Prince Albert this afternoon and that's why he's not here. But I present to you, Pierre Lidguerre, Medal of Bravery.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Drought Assistance for Farmers

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, my questions today are directed to the Minister of Agriculture, and they of course pertain to the . . . how should I describe it, growing crisis of the weather and the drought.

Mr. Minister, yesterday my colleagues on this side of the Assembly suggested at least one new program with respect to crop insurance or, if you will, a modification of that by way of an additional program which would compensate farmers and those unfortunate and growing

situations where the drought prevents seeding and in fact there may be some damage to actually being involved in the process of seeding.

The minister in charge — I don't think I misrepresent his words — essentially held out little hope for this idea. Yet judging by news reports of your speech to the stock growers yesterday in Moose Jaw, there seemed to be a contrary position taken by you as to this suggestion.

My questions to you, Mr. Minister, is this: will you please confirm today, or perhaps better stated, will you clarify today your government's policy on this important issue since the deadline for crop insurance is less than two weeks away, and since, as I think it is evident to everybody, the effects of the drought for wide portions of the province are now sufficiently clear to be able to support what I think is a very good suggestion coming from this side of the House, and other members in the agricultural community?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, the question of what do you do with summer fallow if it isn't seeded is of specific concern not only to people in the very severe drought areas, but even in terms of what some farmers will do with their land that has the capacity to grow green feed.

I would say to the hon. member that there's perhaps three things to keep in mind. He's absolutely right with respect to the deadline of June 20, and farmers are now in the process of deciding whether they will seed summer fallow or not. They obviously hope to get rain, and if they get rain they will be seeding automatically.

What they have recommended to us, and we are looking at with other crop insurance officials, is that perhaps we will extend that deadline beyond June 20 to about June 30, or in that neighbourhood, because of the very, very dry conditions.

The second thing is that we are exploring the possibility of a green feed program where in fact we would encourage people to seed, even in July, in the event that they had some rain, two or three inches of rain. Or it might come down quickly, and they could be planting both summer fallow and stubble to green feed so that you could provide it to people who need cattle.

The third is, we are getting some reports — and I'm sure that you would be interested in them, and we'll certainly share them with you — about the soil conservation and in fact whether . . . what is the best thing to do with summer fallow when it's dry at this point in time. Some farmers are saying to us that they would rather just leave it alone, and others are saying, and certainly some soil conservation people are saying, best we plant it to something, because it sits one more year without anything growing on it, it could be very subject to erosion.

So we are exploring with soil scientists and others the very real possibility that we will be encouraging people to seed the summer fallow to protect it, because if it sits two years fallow with absolutely not touching it, it could be

very subject to erosion. And I'm sure the hon. member would be very interested in what soil scientists and others in various places would be telling us would be the best thing to do for that part of the land — and it's not that much; most of the summer fallow has been seeded — but that summer fallow that still is unseeded, what would be the best thing to do with it throughout the summer in the even that it isn't . . . that we don't experience much rain at all between now and July 1.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. I would agree with the Premier that it's important that we base our decisions on the best possible facts that are available, to make sure that the problem isn't further compounded by government mistake, if I may put it in that regard.

But my supplementary question to the Premier is this: does not the Premier believe that this already being what? . . . June 7, and in the light of this condition which has existed for some several weeks this year, and perhaps for three or four years prior to this year, that enough of this information is now available so that the government can set out with clarity the various options which it would pursue, given the developments that might or might not take place. For example, why not consider the possibility of announcing now, if this is a credible proposition that you're advocating, that the June 20 deadline for crop insurance will be extended, given the information that we have to date.

The most important thing, Mr. Premier, is: why not provide some certainty for the farming community now upon which they can base their economic and farming decisions?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, there's any disagreement between members on either side of the House with respect to providing as much guidance as possible to the farmers that are making the decision. The June 20 deadline is there. We are prepared to make an announcement in advance of the June 20, and as early as in the next few days, with respect to the appropriate extension of that.

The question becomes, if you extend that deadline, then what do you put along with it to encourage, if you are going to encourage people, to take advantage of summer rains that could produce various kinds of feed. Then what implications would that have for crop insurance? Do you still consider something that you would plant to green feed in the summer as summer fallow next year with respect to crop insurance, or do you consider it as stubble? And it has some pretty significant implications with respect to how the farmer farms from then on.

So we are, I can say quite fairly, sincerely, that we are discussing, and have this morning discussed, with people in crop insurance and other provinces and at the federal level, these very questions. We'll be making an announcement very, very soon with respect to the deadline that you're talking about — June 20.

My advise to farmers to date, and this morning is, if it

hasn't rained, I would still be waiting for the rain to see it because you have to June 20. The deadline may be extended. We'll be making an announcement well in front of June 20 to allow them any extended time and new programs that could apply to July or August, or in fact throughout the summer.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier. I will readily acknowledge, Mr. Premier, that these solutions are not easy; they're complicated, as you've indicated. But surely it's the obligation — and I don't mean this in any partisan political sense — the obligation of somebody, somebody, and it is the government, your government, your ministry as the Minister of Agriculture, to start now figuring out how the various possible implications of a solution might impact on the various aspects of the farming community.

And I guess the purpose of my questioning is that we detect, based on the committee of our caucus which has travelled certainly great portions of the drought zone in Saskatchewan, a growing sense of high anxiety about the uncertainty of government programs, both provincial and federal. They are really urging some clarity, that there be some firm decisions taken.

When can we expect, sir, that you will have sorted out all of these various implications and options and have made those decision? Because we argue that the time now is here. In fact, to be very frank with you, it has long passed. Can you not make these statements today, or tomorrow at the very latest?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well we'll make them just as quickly as we can, and they very well may be today or tomorrow. we have made some statements already. We have modified the crop insurance, as you know, for fall seeded crops, and we've announced payments with respect to drought payment. There will soon be announcements on cash to farmers and ranchers.

You will find across western Canada, literally we'll be looking at not tens but hundreds of millions of dollars. It's a comprehensive set of programs on water management, on cash to farmers, and on changes to things like crop insurance and grain stabilization and others.

I would share with the hon. member, the concern is primarily — and we met with the stock growers yesterday, and I spoke to them, a lot of them — is about the drought; it isn't about the government programs. They were saying, look, take your time to make sure you do it right; don't just rush into it; make the right crop insurance changes; listen very carefully and watch each region carefully. And we have said, changes that we'll make in terms of cash and others are retroactive, and the changes we've made with respect to crop insurance.

We've listened to both sides of the House in a very non-partisan sense and have asked for the advice of hon. members and I appreciate your advice — and others on this topic with respect to the management of land and water. And we'll be making announcements, probably on a weekly basis as we go through the summer, with respect

to the conditions and what we can do.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Minister of Agriculture, and perhaps . . . It's a question, but it's in the form of a suggestion, and I put it to the minister in these terms.

As the minister will know, I'm advised that with respect to the cattle industry there's been a rather dramatic drop of the price for cattle since spring, something in the neighbourhood of \$1,200 down to \$800 in some cases, and even dropping more drastically than that.

Mr. Minister, my question to you is this: will you remove today — this is the thrust of the questioning that I direct to you — will you remove today the uncertainty which the cattle industry is facing, in the light of these economics, by announcing a commitment in principle, a commitment in principle to a cash payment program, say of at least \$80 to \$100 per head, in order to permit the cattle people to plan next their moves in the face of this crisis?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, we have already done that. We've made that commitment in principle that there will be a cash payment, and it will go to producers, and it will go to the farmers and ranchers and targeted to those areas of need. We have in the past, and we will in the future.

What the stock growers said to us yesterday, and they represent certainly the south-west right on in to Alberta, that they want us to be careful in designing the appropriate action and the appropriate programs. And they were in no big hurry just to see money today if it was in the wrong kind of form, and they encouraged us, Mr. Speaker, to design the best program that we could, a comprehensive program that dealt with water management, with cash, and with various kinds of programs, like crop insurance, that could be used for some time to come. So we have already made that commitment. We have certainly delivered in the past, and they know that we will in the future.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Premier, I have . . . Mr. Speaker, first to the Premier.

I have one more final question, if I might, on this topic, especially in the view of what I thought I heard the Premier say about a commitment of \$80 to \$100, in that neighbourhood, cash payment. My question to you is this, Mr. Premier: in view of the fact that you've made that commitment, may I suggest a third proposal to you, one being the crop insurance modifications — you've spoken to that; the second one, which you just spoke to a moment ago; a third one which deals with the question of those farmers, those cattlemen, that are forced to sell off their herds.

Would you be in favour in principle and communicate this to the appropriate authorities federally — implement it provincially where possible — that where herds are forced to be sold off because of the crisis in farming, the drought crisis, that there be an arrangement of, say, a tax

deferral process of up to three years, where the farmer who sells under these circumstances has no obligation to pay, and would not pay under the circumstances, unless of course that individual does not get back in the cattle business. The rationale would be obvious. It would be an immediate assistance now, and then of course be an assistance to getting back in when times improve, as we almost certainly hope that they will improve.

Will you give a commitment of your government to that proposal? And finally, would you also make a commitment, clear, unequivocal, that these commitments will be retroactive to a certain date in order to cover what has taken place up to now.

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that it's a serious enough situation that the hon. member of course would not want to be partisan at all about this, and so we won't be.

I will just say to the hon. member that all the things that you've just mentioned so far in question period were suggested by the stock growers or already announced by us. So I just raise that point, so in case there's any question with respect to the sincerity of the stock growers or the sincerity of the cattlemen, they have since suggested that the tax ruling be as you've pointed out. They mentioned that in Calgary, and I endorse it.

And I've already talked to my federal counterparts about that. They suggested the crop insurance changes. They suggested to us a month ago that the payment should be made directly to farmers and ranchers. And they suggested a range. And I said that we were committed to making the payment to ranchers and farmers. I did not way the level.

And so I just say to my hon. colleague, you're just a little bit late with respect to the suggestions. We have either announced them or they've been suggested by the stock growers some time ago. And I'm glad you're onside. I would compliment you on your homework in listening the stock growers. They provide pretty good advice with respect to the livestock industry.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I have a break my word. Something about the Premier's answer prompts me to ask one last question. The Premier says that we're late in pushing these. I really don't care about that categorization. I think all of us agree that what's important is that there be concrete programs set into place to provide relief for our farmers and for our livestock people.

My question therefore to the Premier is this, very simply stated: where are the specifics of these programs? How much of these are going to be shared by the federal and provincial governments? What are the terms and the conditions in terms of regulations, the forms, if any, which are going to be required? Where are these? Will the minister please table them in the Legislative Assembly today to assure me that in fact what I've been advocating

is in fact late. How about tabling these various documents to verify them?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, there has already been in the neighbourhood of 90 to \$100 million announced in terms of drought-proofing. And the hon. member asks if there's anything with respect to water management: \$75 million from the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration), another seven and a half, and another twelve and a half.

We have met and designed the programs with respect to cost sharing on dollars per head to farmers and ranchers across western Canada. And in terms of crop insurance, we've made the modifications in the past, and we've announced them, and we can continue to announce them throughout the summer.

So I would only say, Mr. Speaker, the public is well aware, and the stock growers have said specifically: make sure you do them carefully and accurately; there's no big rush just to announce programs for the sake of announcing them; make sure you do it right. And that's certainly the obligation we have taken on.

But there will be programs. They will be directed towards farmers and ranchers, and there will be the changes as they've seen in the past, as we've already announced in terms of crop insurance. Some of them are out there now cutting fall crops because we've announced it some time ago. That's exactly what they want to see, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Collection of Cash Advances to Cattlemen

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture, the Premier. When we were on tour and talking to cattlemen throughout the drought area, Mr. Premier, one of the concerns that they had is in respect to the cash advance that you had made to the cattlemen, and then subsequently you changed the rules cutting it back to 70 per cent of the original. At the present time, cattlemen are getting notices to make up the difference. I ask you, will you consider staying any collection in respect to that modification in that program?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, we listen, as the hon. member knows, very, very carefully to the cattlemen and to the stock growers, and any suggestions that they have with respect to this program, we will be very sensitive to, and we have been in the past. So I can only say to the hon. member that requests made by the stock growers and the livestock association, are certainly listened to on this side of the House, and we will be very responsive to suggestions that they may have.

#### Expected Announcement Re Drought Assistance

**Mr. Goodale:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. However late, Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier on this same

subject. And however late he may say the NDP are with respect to this issue, I'm sure he'll acknowledge that I first raised it with him as long ago as last fall when the beginning of this program was starting to get evident.

Now, Mr. Premier, I want to ask for a clarification about a point you made in response to an earlier question. Earlier today you suggested that there might be some specific announcements in relation to drought programming — and I took it you were referring to crop insurance in particular — either later today or tomorrow. Now do we have your specific assurance — that we will have a game plan from you, specifically with respect to the crop insurance program, and, if possible, other drought relief measures, no later than the end of the day tomorrow? Is that, in fact, what you said?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I have to say I appreciate the fact that it is now acknowledged that the NDP were late. And it's been acknowledged by the Leader of the Liberal Party, so we know the priorities in terms or ranking here in the legislature, and what's the real concern is the ranking, not the drought itself.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that we have already announced changes in crop insurance with respect to fall-seeded crops. So winter wheat and rye, people can cut and they can bale and they can get it out there, and there will be no penalty with respect to crop insurance.

They know the deadlines with respect to seeding, and we are about to announce, in the next few hours or the next few days, changes that could effect the deadlines that have been suggested by farmers. So I've said to the Leader of the Opposition, I'll say it to the hon. member: as quickly as we can, I would say within the next few hours or the next few days, as best as I can predict right now, we will be making subsequent announces in crop insurance.

I will say we'll likely be making announcements throughout the summer with respect to modifications that may be necessary because of the drought conditions or rain conditions or various kinds of other things that have to do with green feed, deadlines. All I can say for sure is the things we've done in the past, we're quite prepared to do again. New suggestions that farmers and ranchers are bringing forward, we're looking at very seriously.

There will be cash in their pockets to help them, on one hand. Secondly, there will be modifications to various kinds of programs like crop insurance to get the most feed possible out of the blessing of land and resources we have, and in consideration of soil conservation, because it's extremely important at this particular time under these conditions.

(1445)

**Mr. Goodale:** — Mr. Speaker, if I could pursue the Premier's invitation for suggestions, I would like to ask him if in respect to the crop insurance program, if he does intend in those announcements within the next few hours to deal with crop insurance, will those announcements include a measure similar to one taken a couple of years ago, that for those who had reduced crop insurance

coverage because of past claims, the program was modified to bring them back up to the 100 per cent level of coverage under the crop insurance program.

I wonder if the Premier could confirm that that 100 per cent coverage mechanism will be used again this year for those who are suffering successive years of losses. And will the Premier be including, in his program, assistance for farmers in areas outside of the drought area who might have some available pasture or feed land that requires fencing in order to make it usable for grazing purposes.

Will you be providing that specific service, and where might farmers inquire with respect to that service, because phone calls are already coming in about it?

Hon. Mr. Hardy: Mr. Speaker, in regards to the crop insurance program, in 1985 when the drought was on, they decided that they would put in place a plan that would allow for a 10 per cent increase in the amount of crop insurance coverage if the second year drought occurred, like two years in a row.

Last year I believe there was paid out almost \$10 million by Saskatchewan Crop Insurance. This year we don't have an estimate of what it will be, but as the drought continues to expand, it could be a substantial amount of money, in the 20 to \$30 million extra, above and beyond what would be normally paid by crop insurance.

Our best guess right now with crop insurance, if the drought continues for the next two to three weeks, could be in excess of \$500 million in pay-outs by the crop insurance corporation.

#### Appointment to Task Force on Health

**Ms. Simard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. Mr. Minister, today you announced your much talked about task force. And I have to say that Saskatchewan people, particularly those who have suffered from your various health care cut-backs, have nothing to be pleased about.

Will you confirm for us today, Mr. Minister, that the task force vice-chairman is to be your deputy minister of Health, Mr. Walter Podiluk, the same man who was your deputy last year when your government was decimating the health care system? And, Mr. Minister, why should the people of Saskatchewan believe that he won't compound your cruel and heartless policies in the area of health care.

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

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — Mr. Speaker, what I will say to the House and to the hon. member is that the Premier will have a ministerial statement immediately following question period regarding the make-up of the task force. But I would say to the hon. member as it relates to, regardless of what context it might come in from that hon. member and any of her colleagues, frankly, I will defend the integrity of the gentleman whose name she brings to this House in a slur kind of a way.

Mr. Podiluk, who is presently the deputy of the

Department of Health, and has been the deputy and a public servant in other departments of this government, and has served the public in other capacities outside of this government in terms of the separate school system in Saskatoon, and for a good long time has served this province — so what I will say to the House, Mr. Speaker, let it suffice it to say that I will, and thinking people across Saskatchewan, thinking people across Saskatchewan, will recognize the integrity of Walter Podiluk wherever he goes in this province.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Podiluk may be a loyal civil servant, but he takes orders from that man standing over there.

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

**Ms. Simard:** — And he does what the government tells him to do.

Now with respect to the individuals on the task force, I understand that the 400 dental technicians who were fired and who asked for a voice on this task force are not represented, nor are the thousands of people on hospital waiting lists in Saskatchewan represented on this task force. Isn't that correct, Mr. Minister?

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

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — Mr. Speaker, as I've said, the Premier will be announcing the make-up of the task force in just a very few moments. I ask the member to be patient. I will say to the hon. member though, I'm very, very surprised, frankly — and I would say this to the Leader of the Opposition, I think, more so than to that member. The Leader of the Opposition, I believe, would owe an apology to Mr. Podiluk and an apology to a good number of other people who believe very strongly in the integrity of that individual — that's one.

And all I would say again, Mr. Speaker, is that as the Premier announces the members of the task force — and he will do that in a few moments, as I've said, and if the hon. member has decided that this will be her attack, that this will be the NDP's contribution to the blueprint for health care in the future, to attack the integrity of people who bring, in their own right — individuals who bring, in their own right, integrity in the province of Saskatchewan, that's just fine. So be it, Mr. Speaker.

I will stand with the members of the task force because I believe those members of that task force have served this province in several capacities well in the past and, I know, will serve this province well in the future.

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

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

##### Appointment of the Saskatchewan Commission on Directions in Health Care

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the appointment of the Saskatchewan



Commission on Directions in Health Care, reporting to the Premier of the province. This eight-member team will conduct hearings throughout our towns or villages and urban centres to consult with those who use, and those who operate the health care system in our province. They will investigate and recommend immediate and, indeed, long-term solutions to a variety of health care issues including accessibility, quality, and availability of care, improvements in efficiency, and overall management of the system for decades to come.

The commission will be chaired by Dr. Bob Murray of Saskatoon, a well-known ophthalmologist and former dean of the College of Medicine. Mr. Walter Podiluk, presently deputy minister of Saskatchewan Health, will assume duties as executive director and deputy chairperson. Other members are as follows: Morris Anderson of Regina, executive director of development and former president of Luther College; Sylvia Fedoruk, chancellor of the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon; Berva Farr, a registered nurse, and executive director of the Santa Maria Senior Citizens Home in Regina; Maureen Kurtz of Tisdale, and she just stepped out of the gallery, Mr. Speaker, because of illness, a former public health nurse in the province; Bishop Blaise Morand of Prince Albert; and Ernie Moen, a Cabri farmer, well-known for his volunteer and community work in health care and other sectors.

Mr. Speaker, a full schedule of hearings will be announced this summer. Consultation is expected to begin in the early fall. Health care is a top social priority in the province of Saskatchewan. Our commitment to high quality service for our people remains absolute, Mr. Speaker. We are equally committed to responsible management of the delivery system by working in partnership with people throughout our province. I'm confident we'll find workable solutions to the variety of issues facing us today and well into the next century.

I congratulate the new members of the commission and wish them well in their endeavours. Congratulations.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I must wish the members of the new commission well in their endeavours. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and tell the members of the commission, that given the history of this government, wishing them well is the least that any member of this House can give them, and the least that any person in the province of Saskatchewan can give them, because they're going to need all the best wishes that they are going to get in order to do this job, given the abysmal record of this government in health care.

Mr. Speaker, this government has created the crisis in health care — 11,000 people looking to get into hospital beds and they can't because this government's got money for a power plant and not for health care. Four hundred dental technicians and families destroyed — families destroyed by this government — because they've got money for a plant but not for them.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — This government has got no money for a prescription drug plan, Mr. Speaker, none whatsoever. They've spent two years, since 1986, dismantling the finest medicare and hospitalization program in all of North America. They gave it benign neglect from 1982 to 1986, and now they set up a task force to say: undo the damage that we wrought on the province of Saskatchewan. I say, shame on the Premier and the government opposite, and best of luck to this task force because they're going to need it, Mr. Speaker, every sense of it.

The history of this government, Mr. Speaker, is that every time they run into a serious political problem, they set up a task force. This task force ought to know that this is not the first time round that a task force has been set up. What about the Elmer Schwartz report? That was set up; it was conducted in secret. It did a thorough study, hidden until it was raised in this Legislative Assembly, and then discarded. Except this task force is now being set up to ask to reconsider those same issues all over again.

Mr. Speaker, this task force compounds a multiplicity of task forces. This country has seen task forces from one end to the other end. They pile up. The issues of accessibility, the questions of the quality of health care, the questions of rural versus urban — the studies are there. The members of the task force know that themselves that it's there. This is not new.

I want to know what the budget is going to be for this task force. How much are these people going to be paid? Where is going to be the independent staff advising the task force?

Mr. Speaker, I wish the individuals, none of whom I have anything against — they are all very competent people in the province of Saskatchewan. Yes. None of which I have against . . . It's not them that I blame. I blame this government for having created the mess.

I caution the task force and the people of the province of Saskatchewan: don't be disappointed if all you get is a report which, like Schwartz, is going to gather dust as this government goes on its merry way of dismantling the health care program of Saskatchewan. Over our dead bodies — we're not going to allow that to happen, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might suggest a short recess, Mr. Speaker, to room 218 so that we can have tea and mingle with the people who were awarded the distinguished honours earlier in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

And my suggestion is, Mr. Speaker, that we have a 5-minute bell before we come back in. Could that be arranged? I think that's probably the best way to do it.

Leave granted.

The Assembly recessed until 4 p.m.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 80 — An Act to amend The Education Act

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

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

### Bill No. 81 — An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act.

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

**Mr. McLaren:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I'd like to ask for leave to introduce some guests that have just arrived.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. McLaren:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the Assembly, a group of 47 students from the Dr. Brass Elementary School in Yorkton. It's the grade 4 class and they have their teachers with them today: Miss Zandee, Mrs. Pearson, Mrs. Abbott, and Mrs. Grunerud.

It's my pleasure to welcome you children here today, your students, and I've already had pictures and refreshments with the group. I hope you enjoy the Assembly and what carries on here and that you have a real good visit in the legislature and in Regina. And I would wish you all a very, very happy vacation summer after June 30.

I would ask all members to please welcome these students in the usual manner.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PRIVATE BILLS

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

#### Bill No. 01 — An Act to incorporate the Stephen and Michelene Worobetz Foundation

#### Clause 1

**Mr. Goodale:** — Mr. Chairman, I just want to point out to the House that his Bill received a very favourable reception in our second reading debate and in the committee on Private Members' Bills. I think it had a lot to do with the nature of the sponsors of the Bill, Dr. and Mrs. Stephen Worobetz, who are of course very well known to members of this Assembly and very well respected by the

people of Saskatchewan. And I would certainly want to take this opportunity simply to commend this Bill once again to the favourable consideration of members in the committee.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 17 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

#### Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate Full Gospel Bible Institute

Clauses 1 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

## THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 01 — An Act to incorporate the Stephen and Michelene Worobetz Foundation

**Mr. Goodale:** — Mr. Speaker, I would move that Bill No. 1, An Act to incorporate the Stephen and Michelene Worobetz Foundation, be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

#### Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate Full Gospel Bible Institute

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate Full Gospel Bible Institute, be read the third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

## MOTIONS

#### Resolution No. 5 — Effects of Changes in Prescription Drug Plan

**Ms. Smart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm rising to speak to a motion which I'll present to you later, but the message is to 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.

Mr. Speaker, when I first proposed this resolution which has been on the order papers for some time, it was just after the government had announced that they were going to bring in a task force to study the future of medicare. And I think it's just so clear an example of the way in which this government has been governing the province, that they've been walking backwards into the future.

First of all, they've destroyed the prescription drug plan, and then they propose a task force to study the future of medicare. That is just so ironic, Mr. Speaker. Such an example of how this government, which says it's taking us into the 21st century, is going backwards, and it's going backwards with its eyes closed.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — Now obviously, Mr. Speaker, to anyone with any sense of reason and rational judgement, it would make sense to keep a drug plan in place until . . .

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

**Ms. Smart:** — . . . until they've done a review of the medicare and health services. But not this way — doing it absolutely opposite, absolutely backwards. It's government by chaos, as I've said many times in this Assembly; that's what it is. It's unacceptable to those of us on this side of the House.

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

(1615)

**Ms. Smart:** — The Saskatchewan prescription drug plan was a very good plan. It was an excellent plan. This government keeps saying that it wants to preserve and protect health care, and yet it's doing just the opposite, absolutely the opposite. And that's why the people of Saskatchewan can't trust this government opposite.

We can't trust you and we don't trust you, and we particularly now have very great distrust about this task force that's coming in. The vice-chairman is going to be the person who takes his orders directly from the Minister of Health, the same person who's done these destructive changes to the drug plan, demolished the drug plan, and now he wants to study it and see what he might do for the future of medicare.

And I say, preserve us from any ideas that the Minister of Health can funnel through any person concerned with the future of medicare and changes in the health care system. He's already demonstrated that he has absolutely no respect for the health care system whatsoever. And any task force that he has a person on who represents him is doomed to failure because he will be controlling what goes into the task force and he will be controlling the output. And that is completely unacceptable in terms of studying the health care system of this province.

But we can't expect anything different. We had a prescription drug plan which was a program respected and admired across North America as the best example of helping people pay the expenses of curing illnesses, of relieving pain, and of staying healthy. That's why the drug plan did, Mr. Speaker. That's what the Minister of Health has destroyed. And now he brings in a task force to see if he's going in the right direction. Absolutely ridiculous.

Now when he brought in these changes to the drug plan and the destruction of the drug plan — and I must remember to call it the destruction of the drug plan,

because that is exactly what it is. There's a semblance of something still set up, but it is nothing compared to what it was before. And people . . . when they brought in this destruction of the drug plan, many, many people objected. People in my constituency, seniors, people who were chronically ill, people who were on low income — they all protested. All across the province they protested.

And what did the government do then? The government said, oh, we must have made a little bit of a mistake. So they set up a special review panel to help people, supposedly a review panel that nobody found out about across the province. The forms in which to apply for consideration under the special review panel were not easily available to anyone. And there were no written guide-lines to the doctors, to the pharmacists, to the patients, as to who should apply, as to what conditions might be considered by the review panel, and what drugs might be considered.

So they first of all destroyed the drug plan; then they had this tremendous protest, 10,000 people marching in Regina. They said, oh dear, we must do something. They bring in a special review panel. They forget to tell people how they can apply to it. They don't make the forms available. And then they go ahead and say, well now we better do something else to speed it up, so they bring in priority envelopes that people could get, if they were lucky enough to get in touch with a sympathetic MLA who could take their case forward to the government. Or if they happened to find their way through to these sorts of things, they get priority envelopes.

And still the protest mounted, and still the people were hurt by this — hurt over and over again. I have constituent who's paying \$500 a month on medical bills, on drugs, for two heart conditions in their family — \$500 a month out of a senior citizen's income. That's a horrendous amount of money. And people all over this province are having that sort of thing happen to them.

So then the government says oh, oh, we better set up a task force to study the future of medicare. And then when they didn't announce the task force, they waited and they waited and they waited, and they couldn't get it together, and they didn't know who they were going to put on it. And it was all part of the government by chaos that we've been having for the last six or seven years.

Then they bring in the plastic cards. They say they're going to have plastic cards and they're going to computerize everybody. Wonderful! You'll get charged your 20 per cent, then you'll get . . . the 80 per cent will be charged to the government. That's another example of making a suggestion, an idea. Oh, we're going to get plastic cards, they announce. They announced that, what? Six weeks ago? Two months ago? We still don't have any plastic cards.

We still don't have any way . . . people are still paying a hundred per cent of their drug costs and waiting weeks and weeks and weeks to get it back. Now initially they said there was going to be a month's turnaround that people could submit to the drug plan and they'd get their money back in four weeks. That's not happening not at

all.

So people with a monthly cost to their drugs have to pay it one month, full cost. They have to pay it the next month, full cost. Then the third month, even, full cost. And then the government starts to get the rebates back to them. Meanwhile people haven't got money to pay their phone bills that have gone up, their utility rates, the heating costs, the higher rents, and all the other costs and fee increases that this government has imposed on the people of Saskatchewan on top of things like destroying the drug plan.

It's completely unacceptable to people in this province, Mr. Speaker, and people have made that known to this government loud and strong — absolutely loud and strong.

Our senior citizens, who so often have the large drugs bills, are now facing a cruel choice between food on the table or necessary medications. And that is happening, Mr. Speaker. That is happening a lot to seniors, but it doesn't seem to matter to this government opposite.

The loss of the drug plan imposes a severe hardship on Saskatchewan families, especially those with young children, and families who are already struggling to make ends meet because of the crushing tax burden the PC government has made them carry. But that doesn't matter to the government opposite. It makes parents dig even deeper to find the extra \$144 per year the average family of four pays, because of just this one harmful attack on health care.

And I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what about the people who are young or old who are fighting severe or chronic illness? What about people with rare conditions who need the newest and the most expensive drug treatments? Without the drug plan, medication costs for the sick can be astronomical — hundreds and hundreds of dollars per month. And I've told you about the drugs for heart conditions; that's one of the drugs that's really most expensive.

But that doesn't matter to this government either, Mr. Speaker. It promised a special policy to assist people with the highest drug bills but it double-crossed them, and that no policy is in place at this point.

This government taxes the sick and the elderly. It hits the weakest in our society who deserve support while they fight to regain their health, and they don't need additional worries about paying for their medication. But this government doesn't care how cruel and how uncaring it is when it makes the sick and the elderly choose between groceries or medicine — medicine which is life saving in some circumstances, and medicine they can no longer afford.

Now prescription drug purchases have declined across this province since the drug plan was sacked. And the PC government knows that this means that people can't afford to buy medicine. But instead of admitting the truth, it says people are avoiding unnecessary drug purchases. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that that's absolute hog-wash. Patients are given prescriptions by their doctors for a good

reason, and if this government doubts that, it's making insinuations about Saskatchewan doctors that it better stand up and defend.

People who leave their doctor's offices with prescriptions they never fill do so because they can't afford the drug bill at the pharmacy, not because they question their doctor's judgement, and they're insulted that the PC government suggests otherwise.

And I'm insulted, Mr. Speaker, that the PC government would suggest otherwise, that the people I know, the senior citizens, the people who are chronically ill, the people with high drug costs, are somehow abusing the system. Somehow they're drug abusers and they're making a buck on the drug prescription plan. That is the most callous kind of accusation to give to the people of Saskatchewan.

What's really happening is that because this PC government did not support the federal government in changes to the Patent (drug) Act, the cost of drugs have gone up and up and up, and it's the fault of the multinational corporations, drug companies, that these costs have gone up.

**An Hon. Member:** — I had bet that she'd say multinational before she was done.

**Ms. Smart:** — It's the cost of the multinational drug companies . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — She did it again.

**Ms. Smart:** — . . . which the minister from Kelvington does not take seriously. He is laughing at my suggestion that multinational drug companies have any power in this country. And that just shows how ignorant the member is in terms of how drugs come across in this . . .

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

**Ms. Smart:** — If you don't know anything about the power of the multinational drug companies, you know nothing about how drugs are distributed in this country, and that appalling ignorance makes me even more frightened in terms of supporting legislation that destroys the drug plan and puts the costs on the sick and the elderly and the chronically ill and people on low income.

You have a lot to learn, member from Kelvington, a lot to learn because the multinational drug companies, they have admitted . . . The president of the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association has admitted that the prices went up prior to the federal drug prices review panel being put in place, Mr. Speaker. The president, Judy Erola, admitted that the costs went up.

I want to read you, Mr. Speaker, what Linda McQuaig in *The Globe and Mail* said, quoting Mrs. Erola:

The Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of Canada, which represents the large multinational drug companies, pledged that drug prices increases would not outstrip increases in the consumer price index (CPI) when it lobbied

successfully last fall for increased patent protection for brand-name drugs.

And they put on a very heavy lobby. But before the drug panel review could come into place, the drug prices went up. Sometimes they've gone up 100 per cent, "... and in one case the increase has been 250 per cent."

Now under the drug review panel that was to come in under the Patent Act, drugs were supposed to go up by 5 per cent. But they said that since the new legislation was not in place last July, companies were not obliged to keep price increases in line with changes to the consumer price index.

And Mrs. Erola said:

(You) don't increase your income tax contributions until the law says you must.

Since the legislation came into effect last fall, companies will tie their price increases to the consumer price index in the future but will probably not adjust prices that came into effect this month, she said.

Now those, the prices that came within the last while have been very, very high. This has been documented; these are facts. I'm not fabricating this. This has been documented all across Canada.

Jack Kay, the chairman of the Canadian Drug Manufacturers' Association which represents the producers of low-cost generic drugs, said yesterday that some manufacturers are trying to get large price increases into place before the price review board comes into effect.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to note that in Canada we have two pharmaceutical associations. We have the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (of Canada), which is the multinational brand drug companies; and we have the Canadian Drug Manufacturers' Association, which are the generic drug manufacturing companies.

And it is these generic drug manufacturing companies that the PC government in power in Ottawa has attacked by bringing in patent legislation that will not allow our Canadian manufacturers to manufacture low-cost drugs for years and years to come. They used to be able to do it quite quickly. The new legislation means now that they can't do it for a long time. And now we have in place much more power for the multinational drug companies.

The federal Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs did absolutely nothing to support consumers in keeping the drug prices down. And our counterparts here, the government in Saskatchewan, the PC government in Saskatchewan, and the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Affairs provincially, did absolutely nothing to lobby on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan — the seniors, the chronically ill, people on low income, and people who need drugs for various reasons — did nothing to help them in terms of preventing this legislation.

They're just absolutely in bed with their federal

counterparts. They won't do anything to help the people at the grass roots level. They did nothing to prevent this change in legislation federally. And it's because of that change in legislation that our drug companies are . . . prices are going up. It has absolutely nothing to do with the seniors in this province who need drugs because their doctors have prescribed them.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — And because this government opposite won't even recognize the reality of multinational drug companies, they have absolutely no integrity and no sense of justice in dealing with this issue. Instead, they want to support their Premier in attacking the seniors and the chronically ill and the sick, and saying that they're drug abusers. And saying that the cost of the drug plan — they were saying this — the drug plan is going to go up and up and up in cost.

Because we're taking more drugs, they say — not because the multinational corporations are gouging us for the price of drugs. No. Oh, no. The multinational corporations can charge whatever they like. And you'll say that the cost of drugs are going up because the sick and elderly are abusing it. And that's unacceptable analysis of a situation where the reality shows the power of multinational drug companies in the increase in cost of drugs.

(1630)

And your analysis about the sick and the elderly abusing the drug system in based on absolutely no foundation of reality or truth or fact whatsoever. You just want to malign people. You just want to get people set against each other. You want the province to think that somehow a few people are taking a lot of drugs and causing us all to have the price of drugs go up and up and up. There's absolutely no truth in that, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is, the cost of drugs is going up because of who's marketing them, not because of who's taking them. And if you want to find out about the doctors, and if you're going to charge them, I suggest you should put your evidence forward and deal directly with the doctors, if you have a concern about over-prescribing from the doctors' position. If you're going to accuse the doctors, put your evidence on the table. All the facts point to the drug companies increasing the cost of drugs.

Now one purpose of the task force, I note, is to have cost containment, to look at efficiencies. And I say the real cost-effectiveness would have resulted if the government had opposed changes to the Patent (drug) Act, if the government had kept the drug plan in place so that people could share the cost of drugs across the province, all of us sharing in that health care plan, instead of putting the burden on a few who were sick and elderly. And that's the way you could have cost efficiency, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the government opposite that one in four people in Saskatchewan live in poverty; and that 70 per cent of the minimum wage earners in this province are women earning approximately \$756 per month on minimum wage. Now you try to live on \$756 a

month.

If you add children to that, there is extra money for medication, and especially for birth control. It's beyond the reach of the working poor, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to quote from a letter that was sent out to the Community Health Services Association, a letter written by Dr. Sally Mahood, in which she describes the most alarming circumstances in which the health and welfare of women and teenagers is threatened by the drug plan changes, is the whole area of birth control and contraception.

Oral contraceptives now cost \$15 a month, or \$180 a year, minus the deductible of 125 and 20 per cent of monthly costs thereafter. This is \$100 a year, even after the refund. One-half of Saskatchewan teenagers 15 to 17 years old are sexually active, and 54 to a thousand teenage girls get pregnant each year.

How many teenagers have access to \$30 for an initial prescription of birth control medication? How many have a hundred dollars a year to spend on birth control pills? And even more disturbingly, how many can be open enough with parents to submit their contraceptive bills to the family for reimbursement on a family claim submission?

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've all acknowledged in this House that we already face a crisis in unplanned and unwanted pregnancies, and pricing birth control beyond the reach of low income women or teenagers is a sure and certain formula to make things worse. And on behalf of the many women who live in poverty in this province, Mr. Speaker, I want to really protest that change in the drug plan that made the cost of birth control prescriptions so high for people on low incomes.

It's really important that we support in every way we can, the dignity and the respect for women who want to control the number of children they have and who need access to things like birth control medication and oral contraception as easily as possible, so that they have the children that they can care for and that they want, and that they don't get beaten up by this government opposite who says very sanctimoniously that they really support families and that they want to see all children well taken care of.

And then they put in this kind of a changer which hurts families so badly in terms of their expenses, and hurts women who can't get access to birth control information to help them to control the families that they have and to help them to have the wanted children that they need and want, and to be able to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

That's another dimension of the pain and the anguish that this change in the drug plan has cost in its destruction of the drug plan. It's been completely unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, to have this drug plan so changed at a time when the government then says it wants to study the future of medicare.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, there's many more points I could make, including reference, I might add, to a

campaign brochure from the former member for Regina Wascana who said in the 1982 election, "A Progressive Conservative government will eliminate dispensing fees on all drugs prescribed for senior citizens."

Well you eliminated the dispensing fee by bringing in a fee that was even bigger. They can pay now 100 per cent of the whole cost. Maybe that was what you meant behind this promise. Maybe that's what it was. But it certainly isn't an elimination of the dispensing fees on all drugs prescribed for senior citizens as any rational, thinking person would understand a promise like that.

But like so many of the promises brought in by this PC government, you didn't keep the promise, you didn't live up to what you were going to do, you didn't do what you said you were going to do. You say one thing and you do absolutely the opposite. And you go backwards when you say you're going forwards.

In my resolution, Mr. Speaker, I'm asking this Assembly, all the members opposite, to recognize that the Saskatchewan prescription drug plan, as it existed before it was demolished, meant a great deal to the people of Saskatchewan. It meant a great deal to those with chronic illnesses and chronic illnesses in families. If any of you have a constituent who's got asthma, you know how high their drug costs have been. Asthma is not a very rare disease. There are many families with asthmatic family members and often there's more than one person in a family with asthma, and the costs have gone up and been very, very high for those families.

**An Hon. Member:** — And what does this government do?

**Ms. Smart:** — This government charges the families themselves for their sicknesses.

Mr. Speaker, the drug plan meant a great deal to the elderly and it provided necessary security to all Saskatchewan families. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm remembering a constituent of mine who has glaucoma, very high drug costs monthly to help with that condition. That's a condition of blindness, Mr. Speaker. She couldn't even read the form that was available to her to apply for a rebate quickly, and she needed a rebate quickly because her costs, her drug costs went up monthly — were there monthly for her to face. And if I hadn't been able to find her and to help her fill out that form she wouldn't even know it existed. But that's the sort of condition that this government doesn't take into account. And people with sight difficulties go down . . . (inaudible) . . .

Now, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I want to say something about the way this government has destroyed social programs like the drug plan while it goes around sanctimoniously saying to people: oh, we build Saskatchewan, we're building Saskatchewan.

You're destroying Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this government is destroying Saskatchewan, and they also are failing to take into consideration that building Saskatchewan is more than bricks and mortar. Building is providing services and programs, and the very seniors who are hurting so much by the destruction of the drug plan are the ones that worked so hard to put it in place.

They're the ones that built this drug plan, Mr. Speaker. They're the ones that have done it in the past. They're the ones that have built up the social programs, the health care programs. They're the ones that deserve consideration. They're the ones that know that building Saskatchewan is building facilities — yes, is building services, is building programs. They know what it means to build Saskatchewan.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — And I say, Mr. Speaker, that during the first term in office this government opposite treated the health care system — the programs that were built up by the seniors in this province — they treated it with benign neglect. But since re-election in 1986, Mr. Speaker, this PC government has embarked on a contemptible policy of hacking Saskatchewan's health care system to pieces. And, Mr. Speaker, that's a policy of destruction, not construction. That is not building Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we never know when illness will strike any one of us and devastate our lives. We may find ourselves unable to work or to carry on independent lives because of sickness and of illness, and the seniors of this province knew this. So I say to the government opposite, why not build good programs and services instead of engaging in demolition derbys, Mr. Speaker.

And then you look around at the debris that you've caused . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — You guys stopped building nursing homes, and we started building them again.

**Ms. Smart:** — You look around — and I'll have a lot to say about the building of nursing homes when the Health estimates are up, Mr. Speaker. Right now I want to say that this government's engaged in a demolition derby, that's what it is. It's not building Saskatchewan, not one bit.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — You've destroyed the drug plan, you're destroying the services, you're destroying this province. You are not building this province, and you have no respect for the health care programs and the social programs that the people in this province have built up over many, many years.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — And, Mr. Speaker, when they look around at the debris that they've caused, when they look around at the destruction, they say, oops, we goofed; we're going to have to bail out with a task force.

You've had so much flak that you're bailing out with a task force, but the people of Saskatchewan won't be fooled by this attempt to do some damage control, Mr. Speaker. They'll look and see who the vice-chairman is; they know there's a direct control from the Minister of Health on this task force. You won't be looking at what really needs to be done in this province. You'll be using this task force to go full steam ahead, co-operating with

the companies and with the big-business interests that want you to do in this province the way you've done in the drug plan. That's what you're going to be doing with the task force.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — Mr. Speaker, I charge them with that destruction in this province. Mr. Speaker, I realize that in setting up the task force, they admit they've made a big mistake. I'm asking them now in this motion which I want to read. I'm moving:

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.

I move this resolution, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

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

Mr. Pringle: Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and second this important Bill introduced by my colleague from Saskatoon Centre. And I would like to compliment her on introducing this important Bill.

Mr. Speaker, no other issue, no other issue in the Eastview by-election was more important or more central than health care, and specifically, in that by-election, than the hardships created by this government through their cuts to the prescription drug plan. There's no question about that. This government has created tremendous hardship that for thousands and thousands of individuals, families, and senior citizens. There is no question that this program must be restored, reducing hardships and the financial burden on families, low income people, and many seniors.

(1645)

This cut, another step in this government's dismantling of the health care system, as was so eloquently described by my colleague from Saskatoon Centre, it's just another example of the PC insensitivity to the plight of people who are ill. It's another example of the formation in this province of a two-tier health care system. I have proof of dozens of people from Saskatoon Eastview who are experiencing tremendous hardship and are making choices between needed medications and food, Mr. Speaker. And I will talk about some of those examples later on, because I know that some members opposite find this funny. It is not funny.

Mr. Speaker, when you add these costs — the cost of prescription drugs and the fact that they've gone up so much — with the record tax increases by this government, with the increases in unemployment, the increases in property taxes, nursing home fee increases,

and on and on, we see that Saskatoon has the highest inflation rate in Canada last year. When you add all of these in with the prescription drug costs, which are up-front costs, we can see why so many people are experiencing tremendous hardship and families are in desperate financial trouble. When you add these together, Mr. Speaker, it's a tremendous added burden created by the attitudes and the policies of this PC government.

Governing, Mr. Speaker, is a matter of making choices and setting priorities — not priorities based on greed, as we see with this government. This government's priorities are set by the Weyerhaeusers of the world, by the Ramada Renaissance folks, and the Pocklingtons — their blind, right-wing philosophy of giving away important provincial assets and then not having money for important health care programs.

It's wasting money that people of Saskatoon Eastview were well aware of, Mr. Speaker, money on vacant government office space, government advertising, flying off to family weddings, and so on. Some time ago — and this was brought up to me several times during the by-election — the Premier was in New York, talking about Saskatchewan being so wealthy that you could afford to mismanage it and still break even. Well I think we've seen . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — February of '87.

**Mr. Pringle:** — February of '87, someone said. I think we've seen, Mr. Speaker, that there's a limit to the degree of mismanagement that can occur. And now when we see the situation where every man, woman, and child has a debt of \$4,000 in this province in six and a half short years, no wonder there's no money for health care in this province.

Thirty-four thousand dollars a day . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member from Saskatoon Mayfair obviously wants to enter the debate and I hope to hear him later. Thirty-four thousand dollars a day for vacant government office space we waste, yet no money for the prescription drug program for senior citizens; \$25 million a day . . . or a year for government advertising, self-serving government advertising, yet no money for a drug plan. This government is insensitive, it's arrogant, and it cuts programs that put people first. PCs always have, and they always will operate that way.

Mr. Speaker, this government's approach in health care can be summarized in the following statement, and I'd like to quote to show that it's not just the New Democrats that are concerned about this government's record and attitude and performance in health care.

In March of this year, the Saskatchewan Health-Care Association presented a brief to the Minister of Health. It has the 400 member organizations in Saskatchewan representing some 12,000 people, and they say in their executive summary, and I quote:

The Saskatchewan Health-Care Association believes that the best solutions to problems are those arrived at through co-operation rather than

confrontation. We must, however, acknowledge a certain degree of frustration with the lack of progress over the past two years on many important matters. The overriding theme of this brief is the urgent need for communication, co-operation and co-ordination.

That's a brief from a group that represents 1,200 member organizations throughout this province.

Saskatchewan Union of Nurses and the Saskatchewan Medical Association have said the same thing over the last year, Mr. Speaker. Anyone who disagrees, anyone in the province who disagrees with this government's decisions, is viewed as being negative.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I've said before and I'll say again, I'm not negative, but I am angry about the way this government treats people. I'm angry about the way this government makes decisions and then thinks about the decisions later. I'm angry about the drug plan cuts, the cuts to the prescription program . . . or the dental program, hospital waiting lists, and the home care cuts; and on and on it goes, without consideration, Mr. Speaker, for those affected.

Second, I think, a situation that typifies the way this government operates in health care was expressed by a prominent surgeon I talked to last week in Saskatoon who told me I could share this information publicly. He indicated that he was leaving Saskatoon, and he says:

I'm fed up with the lack of priority, the lack of funding, and the inability of this government to allow us to give patients proper and basic health care. (Then he indicates that) This situation is a disgrace and something's got to be done about it.

And he says that the main reason he's moving to Ontario, and he says the main reason . . . he indicates that four or five of his colleagues are leaving. The main reason surgeries are down in Saskatoon is because people like himself and other surgeons leaving the city are working hard because they feel dedicated and committed to their patients and want to tie up the surgeries before they leave. Well that's not a health care system, Mr. Speaker, that is in keeping with Saskatchewan's proud tradition in health care. That's not a health care system that I'm proud of.

Mr. Speaker, we've seen incredible mismanagement in health care, as was described so clearly by the member from Saskatoon Centre, and that's nowhere more specifically the case than in the prescription drug program. There was no pre-thought to prevention and how this program related to prevention. There was no pre-planning or thought into the hardships that this drug plan changes would cause on people.

Then the Minister of Health has the insensitivity and the disdain to those who feel they had to go public in order to present their case and get the help that they needed. Then, out of desperation and public pressure, we see the setting up a review panel with no terms of reference and no clear idea in the province how to access the panel. We see people waiting four to six weeks and longer for delays in the reimbursement of their money. This government



created more stress for people who were already ill when they should have been supported by a helping health care system.

What angered people more, as I travelled during the by-election in Saskatoon Eastview, was that people, in the face of all these hardships, people saw the Premier, the Premier of this province, in his usual callous manner, accusing people affected of being drug pushers and drug abusers. Mr. Speaker, from the Premier of this province, to say that is offensive and irresponsible. It's this government's typical insensitivity and arrogance.

I promised a few of the constituents, Mr. Speaker, that if and when I got in, I would bring to the attention of this House some of their plight, and I would go on all night — I've got 30-some examples — but I want to mention three or four, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to share some of these. The point is, these represent thousands and thousands of situations of other people across the province, and this is why I'm going to raise them.

First of all, I got a call from a single parent mother of four children, working full time trying to make ends meet as a full-time worker, having difficulty with child care arrangements thanks to, in many cases and many ways, the child care policy of this province. Trying to make ends meet; basically saying to me, look, I'm going under; what can you do? And basically feeling very, very desperate and unaware as to where to go. And that's not an isolated example.

Another example of a senior who's a pensioner. She was not able to get special coverage. She was under tremendous financial stress, and at the time I talked to here it had been seven weeks since she had received her refund, Mr. Speaker — drug cost totalling \$250 per month.

I have another couple, an older couple who are retired, assisting a middle-aged daughter who had a disabled and mildly retarded child. And this family was under tremendous financial stress and strain. The man of this couple was on four drugs. And I could name them, but it doesn't matter. They point is that one of these drugs had tripled in seven months; another one had tripled; another one had gone up 25 per cent, and another one 40 per cent. As was indicated by the member from Saskatoon Centre, gouging of the worst degree by the multinational drug companies.

And basically this person had an outstanding debt of 350 to \$400 per month, again in severe financial stress and at his wit's end, still worrying about their daughter, the mildly retarded child.

Another senior citizen, Scott Forget Towers in Saskatoon, on two drugs, one for arthritis, one a drug to thin her blood; could be again under tremendous hardship. More importantly, she was placing herself at risk. She was supposed to take two blood thinning pills a day, and had made a decision on her own that she could not afford to take two a day; she would take one a day, and that way they would last twice as long, despite concerns from her

doctor that that was injurious to her health. She was not prepared, she was not qualified, Mr. Speaker, to make that kind of a decision. But she felt that she had no choice.

Also, she was on arthritis pills, and because of the cost of these arthritis pills was going for two and three months without taking the until the pain got so intense and the swelling got so great that she couldn't get her shoes on, and she had to resume taking these again. And that was what her situation was all about; again, in desperate financial straits, sending back medications over the counter because she couldn't afford them.

One final example . . . two more examples, Mr. Speaker. One, a couple in Scott Forget Towers, again in Saskatoon, who spent between 250 and \$350 per month on drugs — conditions of asthma and heart failure — had been waiting five weeks at the point I saw them for their last cheque. Again, this couple, they'd order their drugs over the counter, and then they'd take which ones they could, and turn the others back. They were refusing to establish at the drug store an account, because they knew they'd never be able to pay it off.

And, Mr. Speaker, the final example . . . and I raise these because these people are feeling desperate, and they're just sick about the fact that they worked over many years to build up a good health care system. Now at this point in their lives they're feeling very vulnerable and feeling powerless to do anything about it, along with their concerns about if they should require nursing home care, they can't get into nursing homes; and, of course, with the cut-backs last year to home care, they weren't getting the home care service they required.

But this example is a woman who had a husband in a nursing home, and she was in the Scott Forget Towers. Again, there are some 400 seniors there, in my riding. Her husband was in a nursing home. She thought she would be evicted soon because she was unable to pay her way in the Saskatoon housing authority, unable to pay the rent because the costs that her husband was incurring in the nursing home were continuing to eat into her pension at her apartment. And of course, as we've had to pay for more and more things in the nursing homes, pensioners have had to dip into their savings or their spouse's pension. And Mr. Minister, there are many people in Saskatoon Eastview who are in a suite, but also have a spouse in a nursing home.

Now this person was paying 50 to \$60 per month for her husband in the nursing home; another 40 or \$50 for her, and she simply was falling short every month. Besides worrying about his illness and not being able to see him because he was across the other side of the city — as you know we have the Parkridge Centre on the extreme west side of the city and this person was on the east side — so worried about him, worried about the finances and not able to see him and no relatives in the city, Mr. Speaker, again creating tremendous hardship and very angry with this insensitive government for making those kinds of changes to the prescription drug program.

Importantly, Mr. Speaker, these are not statistics; these are real people, many of them Saskatchewan pioneers

who are sick by this government's dismantling of the health care system, one that took them, as I said, many, many years to help build up.

In the by-election the voters of Saskatchewan Eastview and Regina Elphinstone said that this government's record in health care was just not good enough. Residents are used to sensitivity in government, they're used to co-operation with government, they're used to co-ordinated services, and they're used to competent government, Mr. Speaker.

**An Hon. Member:** — Those were the good old days.

**Mr. Pringle:** — The good old days, as my colleague says. They're not happy with the ill-thought out, knee-jerk actions and planning of this PC government. They're used to a government over many years, Mr. Speaker, that said one thing and does it. This government has no mandate to cut back on the prescription drug program.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.