

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to all the members of the Legislative Assembly, some 15 grade 2 and 3 students in the Speaker's gallery who are from St. Timothy and MacNeill schools here in Regina. They are accompanied by teacher Jim McLeod, as well as chaperons Carol Schlademann, Trudy Folk, and Sandra Yungwirth.

Mr. Speaker, these students are here to take part in an initiative relative to reading, entitled "Reading in the Rotunda," and I'll be meeting with them after question period this afternoon to read to them in the rotunda and as well to have some refreshments with them after that.

So I'd ask them to be recognized and for all members of the Assembly to welcome them here today.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to introduce through you, and to the House, some 20 grade 8 students from Quill Lake High School. They're accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Joan Krienke, Mr. Pat Orobko, and Mr. Mark Anderson, and their bus driver, Eugene Horbach.

I want to ask all members to join with me in extending a warm welcome to the students. I likewise will be meeting with you at 3 o'clock for pictures and subsequently in room 214 for drinks. I wish you a safe return to Quill Lakes.

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

**Mr. Upshall:** — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you and to this House a number of farmers, about 40 farmers who have come in today, farmers who are concerned about the economy of Saskatchewan as it relates to agriculture in particular, concerned about the federal drought program and its effects. We will be meeting with them later this day, and I hope that they enjoy the proceedings here today. I'd like all members to welcome them.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Drought Assistance Payments to Farmers

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this first question of this sitting of this session is directed to the Premier, who also happens to be the Minister of Agriculture, and it pertains to the question of the drought payments in agriculture and the fact that the Speech from the Throne yesterday was stone silent. In fact one might argue that the silence was deafening with

respect to the drought payments under the federal-provincial program.

Mr. Premier, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, in light of the fact that before the federal election you and your federal counterparts were promising the farmers of this province a payment in the order of 40 to \$45 per acre, and now it seems like we're going to be at \$12 per acre or less, how in the world can you explain this breach of trust, this break of a major promise? How is it that you can explain this delay and this drastic reduction in much needed drought relief? It is because your government is so preoccupied with privatization that you have no time for the farmers of this province of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member, I think everybody in Saskatchewan would like to see more money faster with respect to the drought program. I have personally discussed it with several cabinet ministers at the national level, and the premiers met with the Prime Minister just last week. And as a result of all the western premiers bringing that information to bear, I can't, and will not, speak for the federal government. It's their program. They said that they would be delivering \$40 an acre, Mr. Speaker, and I have encouraged them to make the payments as quickly as possible and as large as possible, Mr. Speaker. They have informed me that they are going to be giving the payments as outlined at 12 and 7, and final payments to come in in June or July.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see more, faster, but I am not the federal Minister of Agriculture, and I'm not the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier. I must say, with the greatest of respect to the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, that that is probably one of the lamest answers I've ever heard from any Premier on this important issue.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — And I have to tell you, Mr. Premier, that promises of meetings and more meetings, statements wishing that your federal counterpart, Mr. Mulroney, would give you more help, is not going to be enough.

My question to you is this: why was it that both you, as the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan and the Minister of Agriculture, and the federal counterpart, Mr. Mayer, and the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Mulroney, were able to announce with certainty \$45 per acre prior to the federal election and now are reducing it to \$12 per acre after the election? Isn't that a breach of trust and a betrayal? Why don't you 'fess up and admit to that?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows that the only question here is a matter of how fast . . . We will see if they deliver the \$40 an acre, and you and I will be able to watch. They said there will

be an initial payment and a final payment, and they said that at the outset.

Now there's an initial payment and a final payment, Mr. Speaker, and we'll see, and you may be right. I don't believe that you will be, but we'll see that it will be in \$40 an acre for maximum, and then some place down, depending on how much drought there is. So there's an initial payment and then there's a final payment.

I'd like to see the initial payment bigger and larger and faster. But they've decided what it is. They've decided. I didn't; they did. Now I would like to see the final payment come as quickly as possible. We will see. So I guess you and I will stand here in June or July and we'll find out if in fact they made the \$40 an acre or whether they didn't. I'm going to hold them to it, and I'm sure you will.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. Is the Premier telling this House that in spite of all of these trips that he makes to Ottawa to speak to his good pal Brian Mulroney, in spite of all the statements that he makes about how close his connection is with respect to Mr. Mulroney on behalf of the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan, are you trying to tell this House that you yourself don't know the size of the final payment, or when it's going to be made?

Look, the farmers of Saskatchewan are making plans now for seeding. They've got all kinds of debt obligations. Can you not tell this House what the final payment is going to be made, or are you taking the position that Mr. Mulroney simply doesn't trust you and doesn't take you into his confidence? Is that the situation?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the federal government said that there would be a payment of \$40 in two instalments, and I'm going to hold them to it. They said there'll be an initial payment and a final payment. Now we'll see if they stay with it. I'm going to hold them to it. I know every farmer in Saskatchewan and people across western Canada will. They make their financial decisions, and they set their own budget. I can't do that. They said it would be \$40 an acre in two payments, initial payment and a final payment. We'll see, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Hon. Premier. This is a new question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier represents to the House at this stage in the game that he pretends he's like the piano player that's caught in a house of ill repute. He says he doesn't know what was going on upstairs. That's basically what he's saying. He is saying that he is totally innocent, totally innocent of what the federal government is planning with respect to the payments for the rural farmers and the farmers of this province of Saskatchewan.

I ask the Premier this: can you tell us whether or not you have made any written submissions to the Prime Minister and to the federal Minister of Agriculture as to the final payments to make sure that you're going to hold them to that \$40 per acre, and if you have so, will you undertake to table them today before question period is over?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says first that I don't have any stroke with the federal government, and then he asked me if I'd made any submissions to them, as if it would make any difference. Well I don't . . . I mean, what's his point. Look, I am in constant conversation with the federal government on drought, on sharing . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. The Premier's having difficulty answering the question . . .

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

**The Speaker:** — The difficulty is due to constant interruptions. I would ask the hon. members to please allow the Premier to continue.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the co-operation from the members opposite. Let me just say to the members opposite — as they know, since 1984 with the election of the new government, we have lobbied Ottawa for money for farmers every month, every year, and literally billions of dollars have been delivered, not only across the Prairies but even to the province of Saskatchewan.

Now the opposition says they'd like more, faster. Wouldn't we all? They say that, look it, this isn't good enough because there's an interim payment and a final payment.

Mr. Speaker, I'm saying to the federal government — and I did prior to this election, the 1988 election — we need money and we need drought assistance. And they came up and said they would deliver. Now we'll hold them to that.

I talk to them about interest rates on practically a daily basis. I talk to them about drought payments, I talk to them about stabilization, I talk to them about international marketing, about trade, all of the time. And much of the influence comes from this province, Mr. Speaker. But I am not the Prime Minister, and I am not the federal Minister of Finance, nor the federal Minister of Agriculture, but much of what they can do and has been initiated over the last four years came from Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question. It is really amazing to see all the so-called rural MLAs — back-benchers, the members of the Hallelujah Chorus — giving the loudest applause to the answer that says: I talk, I continue to talk, and I promise I will talk in the future.

We know the Premier is a great talker and a smooth talker. We know that's the only thing he's got to offer the people of the province of Saskatchewan. I want to ask . . .

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

**The Speaker:** — I realize that the members are enthusiastic after coming back. Unfortunately now, the

Leader of the Opposition is having the same difficulty. I ask for the same co-operation.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is this: before the federal election, you and the Prime Minister represented to the people of Saskatchewan that the federal-provincial program on drought relief was agreed upon; namely, that there was going to be money from the provincial purse and money from the federal purse to result in approximately 40 to \$45 per acre in much needed drought relief. That's the position.

My question to you, sir, is this: has the provincial government found the money to "pony up" its share to that drought payment program in order to ensure the farmers of Saskatchewan getting that \$45 per acre, or are you holding it back and spending it on privatization schemes and other wasteful programs of your administration?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I'm not sure if the Leader of the Opposition wants Saskatchewan to pay the federal government's share, whether he's asking us to bail out the federal government. I don't think he'd want the taxpayers of Saskatchewan to take more than their fair share of any kind of program. We have cost-shared programs before. We've delivered in terms of drought, in terms of interest rate protection, in terms of several programs — billions of dollars, most of it coming from the federal government. You know my position. I want to see most of the money come from the federal government. They have more money than Saskatchewan does.

With respect to privatization and public participation, it makes us money. If you want money for health and education, as you'll see in our upcoming budget, you'll see it as the result of us replacing high interest rates internationally, so that we get the money from the people. And that makes us money, so we have money for agriculture, a brand-new agricultural college — a \$100 million agricultural college — a \$100 million agricultural college because we can finance it and afford it, Mr. Speaker, let alone federal money that comes in here as the result of us asking for it and having had it delivered to the province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, look, the farmers of Saskatchewan know that you're hooked on this one. They're having a little bit of difficulty reeling you in to give the truthful and proper answers to this question.

The issue is not whether or not your government bails out Ottawa. The issue is, are you going to help out the family farmers of the province of Saskatchewan. The issue is not some intergovernmental dispute. The issue is, did you or did you not have an agreement before the federal election to guarantee that \$45 per acre. I want a yes or no to that question, and I want a copy of that agreement tabled, and I want to know why the agreement was not honoured and is not being honoured by your government.

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I say as succinctly as I can to the hon. member, we have had programs delivered to Saskatchewan from the federal government — some entirely by the feds, some cost shared — and we will continue to deliver programs like that.

I don't want to pay any more than our fair share. If you're asking me to bail out the federal government and put more Saskatchewan money into a federal program, I'm not going to do that. We will participate and we will be there, and the federal government knows that.

Now if you want more money faster, I agree with you. I'd like to have more and faster because we need it here. But I am not going to take the Saskatchewan taxpayer and bail out the federal government, and I don't think you'd want that to happen. Now if you're saying that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I'd be surprised. I don't think farmers have extra money to be bailing out the federal government. We want them to pay because they have more money and it was their program.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to hold fast. We'll be there, as we have in the past in agriculture, as we will in the future, because never before in the history of Saskatchewan have you seen more defence and more dollars, and more talking and dollars in agriculture than in this administration.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to insist that the Premier give us a straightforward answer on this.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — And I'm going to insist that the Premier tell us now, yes or no, whether or not prior to the federal election he and Mr. Mulroney had an agreement as to the amount of money that the province would "pony up" into this cost share program for drought relief. Can you give me a simple yes or no to that? And if the answer is yes, I want to have a copy of that agreement; and if the answer is no, then I want you to tell this legislature and the farmers of this province why you betrayed them before the federal election if you didn't have that agreement. I want those answers.

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, what we agreed was: it is a federal program and we would discuss the possibilities of some sort of joint administration and/or financing after the program is implemented. There it is. And that's the same thing we did with the cattle program, and the same thing we did with the interest rate protection, and the same we've done with the last drought program. We administer it. In crop insurance, we administer it; the federal government comes up with the money.

Now that's been going on for a long time, and maybe we should send you the various kinds of programs and the

ways that we administer them, Mr. Speaker. But we often cost-share them, and in many cases we do. Some cases they pay it all, some cases we pay part. And we've seen that before.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question. I find the total lack of forthcoming response by the Premier to be disappointing, not only to this legislature — forget about this legislature — but to the farmers and the farm communities. Because what he's saying in effect is, you know, we'll buy a combine . . . I wonder if this is the way he operates? I'm going to buy a combine; we'll worry about the price afterwards. Don't worry about those little details.

My question to you is this, Mr. Premier. I've received correspondence, I've seen some letters, Mr. Premier, from a farmer in Lake Alma, Mr. Melvin Schad. Mr. Schad is quoted as saying this about the drought payment . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . and the Minister of Health should pay some attention to this. He's a well known agricultural expert, no doubt.

Mr. Speaker, this is what this farmer, Mr. Schad, said. He said, "You hear all this malarkey about what they'll pay. Then they chisel it down to nothing," is what Mr. Schad said, talking about the drought payment announced. They chisel it down to nothing.

Mr. Premier, my question to you is: how in the world are you going to explain this one away to Mr. Schad and the hundreds of others, the thousands of other farmers who depended upon your commitment on the drought payment? How are you going to explain this away without telling them that what you're really doing is you're wasting money to your friends in big business and selling off the province of Saskatchewan to privatization? How do you sell that to Mr. Schad?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said to the hon. member, we'll see, and we'll hold it to you. We'll see if the payments are made, Mr. Speaker. When the payments don't come, or they're not here fast enough, then the opposition can say, well I'd like to see more, faster. Well that's not much imagination in a question period, not very much at all. All right.

If we get into the whole world of big business, and if the Leader of the Opposition wants to get into it, about farmers, okay, I can talk about all the people that are doing businesses with banks on farmers. We want to get into all that, and who's helping the farmers. Okay, you want get into it lock, stock and barrel, the whole thing . . .

We want more money, faster, for farmers, as you do, so we will be watching with you, and we know that billions of dollars have come into Saskatchewan because we've worked with the federal government, and we expect it to continue.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Premier . . . I have a final question, Mr. Speaker, for the Premier on this topic. It's going to be

straightforward and simple. Do you have a commitment, yes or no, from the federal government? Do you have a commitment for that payment of \$45 per acre on the drought payment and, if so, when will it be made? Do you have that commitment that you promised the farmers of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the federal government and the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture said . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, we've just gone through a federal election and the federal government was re-elected, and what they said is they're going to make a payment of \$40 an acre, and they're going to do it with an initial payment and a final payment. I'm going to hold them to it. They made that a public statement across Canada and across western Canada. Every farmer in this province will hold him to it. Let's see if they deliver.

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

### Long-Term Stability for Farmers

**Mr. Upshall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, you were saying, along with your federal counterparts, that farmers were going to have cash in their hands before spring seeding and, despite what you say, you were indicating that they were going to get 45 bucks an acre so they could seed. Now we see the program tinkered with and changed. Now you're saying that, better late than never, at least you know they're going to get something.

Just in case, Mr. Premier, that you have been so far out of touch with Saskatchewan farmers, I'll tell you that it costs \$20, 25, up to \$50 an acre to seed. If I'm getting paid \$7 or \$12 dollars on 500 acres, Mr. Premier, my question to you is how many acres do you think farmers can seed on that amount and what are you, Mr. Premier, going to do with those farmers who lose their land because you and your federal counterparts won't come through with the program?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I heard the hon. member say those very same words in Willow Bunch not too long ago, and he was going on that there was no help for agriculture. And you know what? People didn't believe that. They know that we have backed up agriculture. I believe I'm the first Premier of the province of Saskatchewan to take on the responsibility so that we can put more money into agriculture.

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Now I'll bring the list with me for the next question period so I can go down through all the things that we have delivered to agriculture, and we're going to continue to deliver.

So I'll just say to the hon. member, we want \$40 an acre. We need even more than that to help farmers, and we want it fast and we want it as quickly as possible. The federal government has gone and said there's going to be two payments — an initial and a final. I'd like to see more in the initial. They said it will be \$40. We're going to hold them to that, or 40, 45, depending on the drought area. We're going to hold them to that.

And we will be there for farmers. And as you've seen in the Speech from the Throne, and you'll see in the budget, additional help for agriculture, for farmers, helping them finance the home quarter, and helping them operate, and several new programs as a result of the concerns that have been expressed and expressed again in favour of our administration. And I think the new member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg is living proof of that.

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — You were there.

**Mr. Upshall:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I was saying it in Willow Bunch, and we won Willow Bunch. I tell you . . .

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

**Mr. Upshall:** — I tell you, Mr. Minister, I'm certain that people of that constituency now know exactly what they got out of that by-election.

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

**Mr. Upshall:** — During the last federal election we put forward a proposal that would have gone a long way to provide stability for debt-ridden farmers in Saskatchewan — income stability and debt stability. In light of all the confusion with the western grain stabilization, with all the confusion with the drought, with all the double talk that you and the federal government is putting forward, my question, Mr. Minister, is this: have you made representation to the federal government giving them an outline for a long-term, stable plan in agriculture? And if you have, Mr. Minister, will you tell us what that is today?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Now you're talking. I commend the hon. member for a reasonable question about a long-term program to deal with disasters in agriculture. That's exactly what we've been doing.

The Minister of Finance, for example, is in Ottawa today discussing agriculture, finance, interest rates. And part of that package is looking at long-run crop insurance, drought relief, safety net mechanisms for agriculture that can be put in place so that farmers understand them without changes, without any kinds of new programs or ad hocery.

That's what every Minister of Agriculture is doing. That's what the federal government has asked us to do, and that's what the farm groups have been asked to do. So they've brought together all their ideas now, and that's precisely, Mr. Speaker, what we're doing and why we're

discussing it with the federal government.

I don't think it's time for us just to say we got a whole bunch of extra money to bail out the federal government in agriculture programs. I think it's a good idea we talk just about what you said — long-run programs that can be cost-shared in three ways between farmers, provincial government, and the federal government, to make sure we've got the kind of insurance and crop insurance . . . In fact, the minister of crop insurance has just announced significant changes with respect to feed programs, with respect to the livestock industry, Mr. Speaker, and with respect to forage, which will help make sure that an awful lot of farmers are better protected, better protected than they've ever been in the past.

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

### Debt Crisis and Drought Payments

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — My question is to the Premier. It deals with the farm crisis, dealing with the debt problem and the lack of a drought payment. Mr. Premier, you have oft said that you would back the farmers to the wall, that you'd open the treasury to them in the time of need. Now many farmers are asking and saying that you're going to the wrong wall. They didn't expect you to go to the wall of China. But here we are today asking for a drought payment that you promised during the election. I want to ask whether \$1 from the provincial treasury is going into this payment. Is there \$1 that you're putting in to help with this drought program?

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, we have put dollars into past programs and, Mr. Speaker, that's under consideration now. I don't want to be bailing out the federal government unless that's what you're . . . Mr. Speaker, if you . . . I'm not sure the hon. member knows. And he mentions China, where we sell a good part of our wheat and a lot of our wheat. And one of the first people to go there was Mr. Alvin Hamilton and make those wheat sales. And every time we go back and we sell more wheat, Mr. Speaker, at higher prices. The Chinese are saying, yes, we like Canadian wheat, and that's the reason we go to China, Mr. Speaker. And the NDP doesn't like international marketing. They're not interested in international trade, Mr. Speaker. Let me say, he mentions China; I can respond to China. We sell wheat in China, Mr. Speaker. You're going to see more sales at higher prices as a result of me being in China this last fall.

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

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

### MOTION UNDER RULE 39

#### Federal Drought Assistance Program

**Mr. Upshall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Rule 39 in this Assembly on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity. The issue is the federal government's drought program which has turned out to be a total disaster for Saskatchewan farmers. And this

issue indeed, Mr. Speaker, is urgent and is pressing.

During the federal election campaign the Mulroney government made grand promises about a drought aid that would be adequate, timely, and fair. These promises have been broken. Therefore, I seek leave of this Assembly to move a motion along the following lines:

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture for their failure to ensure that the federal drought assistance program meets the needs of farmers and for their failure to ensure that the program be developed to meet the needs of our farm families in terms of timing, amount of payment and distribution of payment.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I invite all members to support this very urgent matter and join in this vote today.

I move this, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Quill Lakes.

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

Leave not granted.

## MOTIONS

### **Referral of Retention and Disposal Schedules to the Standing Committee on Communication**

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I have a number of routine motions that I'd like to pass, with leave and co-operation from the members opposite, if that could happen.

I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, and with leave of the Assembly:

That the retention and disposal schedules approved by the Public Documents Committee be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on Communication.

Motion agreed to.

### **Referral of the Report of the Saskatchewan Legislative Library to the Standing Committee on Communication**

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I move again, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley and with leave of the Assembly:

That the report of the Saskatchewan Legislative Library be referred to the Standing Committee on Communication.

Motion agreed to.

### **Referral of the Report of the Provincial Auditor to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, by leave of the Assembly:

That the *Report of the Provincial Auditor* for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1988, be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Motion agreed to.

### **Referral of Public Accounts to Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, with leave of the Assembly, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley:

That the *Public Accounts* of the province of Saskatchewan for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1988 be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Motion agreed to.

### **Referral of Annual Report and Financial Statements of Crown Corporations to Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, with leave of the Assembly:

That the annual reports and financial statements of the various Crown corporations and related agencies be referred as tabled to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Motion agreed to.

### **Referral of By-laws of Professional Associations to Special Committee on Regulations**

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, by leave of the Assembly:

That the by-laws of the professional associations and amendments thereto be referred as tabled to the Special Committee on Regulations.

Motion agreed to.

### **Granting Leave of Absence to Member for Canora**

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, by leave of the Assembly:

That leave of absence be granted to the hon. member for Canora, Mr. Lorne Kopelchuk, from March 8 to March 18 to attend on behalf of this Assembly, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Thirty-Eighth Seminar on Westminster Parliamentary Practice and Procedure.

Motion agreed to.

**SPECIAL ORDER**

**ADDRESS IN REPLY**

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a tremendous honour to rise today for my maiden speech to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. I'm truly honoured to share that distinction with a most gracious and talented representative, Her Majesty, the Lieutenant Governor. And I'm sure you'll agree with me, Mr. Speaker, when I say that Her Honour's first presentation to this Assembly was one most fitting with the finest traditions of this place. I personally convey to Her Honour my congratulations on a job very well done.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Mr. Speaker, for me, this is an historic occasion in more than one way. It is my first opportunity to speak to this legislature. It is also, Mr. Speaker, the first time in history, the first time in history and in the history of this province, that a Progressive Conservative MLA for the constituency of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has spoken to the Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — I'm truly humbled at the trust my neighbours and friends have placed in me to represent their interests and the interests of their farm families.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne is a plan of the government for the coming session. The plan laid before us is clear, certain, and very impressive. This government is making change and it's making progress. We are planning for the future. We can no longer live in the past.

Mr. Speaker, the government has a plan for the future. It has a vision, and it's prepared to share that vision with the people of Saskatchewan. This government is an agent of change, and it's a government of progress because it cares. It cares for our families, it cares for our farms, it cares for our homes, it cares for our environment, and it cares about our future. It truly cares, but it also acts.

I wish to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I discovered the importance of that firsthand in the election I have just concluded. The member for Riversdale said it well, Mr. Speaker, when he said to my constituents, "Send them a message." He went door to door amongst my neighbours and friends. "Send them a message," he said.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that my constituents took his advice and they sent a message.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — And I, Mr. Speaker, am proud to deliver that message here today.

I will share with you, Mr. Speaker, the nature of the message from the folks of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. They said, you have a plan; you have to have a plan, and you have to have a plan if you want to represent us; you have to show us your plans, and you have to show us you care. They said, tell us what your vision is and let us make a

judgement. They said, provide policy that addresses our needs; show us you care, and how you'll care for us.

And they said it in the loudest terms, Mr. Speaker. Tell us the truth, tell us the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. My constituents, and indeed the people of Saskatchewan are growing tired, very, very tired, of the unending assault of distortions and fear mongering. It happened in the free trade debate, and again in the by-election.

And I say to the member from Riversdale, who is noticeably absent, I challenge him to come back to Rockglen . . .

(1445)

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. I'm aware that the hon. member is giving his first speech in the House and he's not expected to know all the rules. I'd just like to draw the following rule to his attention — that the absence of members is not permitted to be referred to by members in the House when they're giving a speech.

**Mr. Wolfe:** — I will withdraw the remark.

And I say to the member from Riversdale, I challenge him to come back to Rockglen and publicly debate with me the contents of his letter to my constituents. Tell us the truth. Tell us the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

I say to the Leader of the NDP, I'm willing to face him before the people I represent and have them be the judge. Is he prepared to stand before the people he wrote to and defend his actions? I think not, Mr. Speaker. I think not. But the invitation is open.

This throne speech is exactly the kind of thing the people of Saskatchewan are asking for. It deals with the modern world, not the past. It deals with change; it deals with progress; and it shows how much the government really cares.

It deals with health care and the ageing population. It deals with education and new technology. It deals with family support and children. It deals with seniors' housing. It deals with the environment. It deals with the economy. It deals with agriculture; it deals with the problems of the drought. It deals with the future, Mr. Speaker, not the past.

It addresses squarely the needs of our farm families and the families throughout this province, because this government truly cares. It not only cares, but it also acts.

I want to touch with you for a moment on one aspect of this government's policy that is extremely important to families in every town, city, village, hamlet, and farm. The policy is interest rate protection and the courageous stand that this government took, not only this year, not only last year, but in every year since year one of its mandate.

This government, Mr. Speaker, this PC government, is no Johnny-come-lately on a vital issue of protection for the homes and families and farms and farm families that families have worked so hard to build for themselves.

But you have to wonder at the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker. You have to really wonder. He says he cares — he cares for the old, he cares for the sick, he cares for our farm families, he cares for the hungry, the poor. He says he cares. But does he?

When that gentleman was the deputy premier and our Premier became the Leader of the PC Party — it's in *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker — when the PC opposition was begging the member from Riversdale to give some help to the families of this province, the member from Riversdale ridiculed the idea of interest rate protection. This member who says he cares, ridiculed the idea of protecting our farms and farm families.

I refer to you one example, Mr. Speaker, on December 9, 1981 in *Hansard*. The PC leader was pleading with the government to bring forward a program to pay the difference between the drastic interest rates occurring under the NDP and some reasonable number such as 12 per cent. What was the response of the leader of the NDP? I quote, Mr. Speaker. When asking to bring in such a program, he said . . . and I repeat this. This is the same member who today says he cares; he cares so much. Do you know what the member said? We're not going to allow that — we're not going to allow that. Can you believe it? The member from Riversdale was not going to allow a program of interest rate protection.

So the PCs said, if not, and if not that, then what is your solution? Give the people some help. And again the member from Riversdale had his flippant response. Again I quote. He said:

My advice to the people of Saskatchewan is that they should try hard to continue their mortgage payments as best as they can and as best as they have done in the past.

Make your mortgage payments as best as you can, he said. And he was told, Mr. Speaker, that people couldn't make their payments — they couldn't make their payments. As best as they could, they would. But they couldn't. For Heaven's sakes, Mr. Speaker, the rates were 20 and 21 per cent. And this man, who says he wants to lead the province, ridiculed that. He ridiculed that we should try to help Saskatchewan families, Saskatchewan farm families, and the same families that today he cares so much about.

What are his plans? The people have a right to know. Let's see what saying one cares really means. If the member from Riversdale has had a change of heart about interest rates, then let him tell the people, and let's know where he stands. Show us you care. We are used to changes of heart from the member from Riversdale, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to delve into that a little bit more too, as it relates to the throne speech.

This throne speech lays out the government's plans for public participation, Mr. Speaker, and it sets out certain specific objectives, because this government cares. It has a plan for change and progress. This government is a government of the future and not of the past.

I would like to read into the record some of the arguments

for public participation, Mr. Speaker. The guiding principles of public participation are, quote:

One, to provide a mechanism for all residents of Saskatchewan to invest in the province — to provide a mechanism for all residents of Saskatchewan to invest in the province.

Secondly, to provide an alternate source of capital for major new investments in resource enterprises and industrial products — to provide an alternate source of capital for major new investments in resource enterprises and industrial projects.

And thirdly, to reinforce the identification of a partnership between the government and the people of the province in the development of our economy — to reinforce the identification of a partnership between the government and the people of the province in the development of our economy.

The document goes on, Mr. Speaker. It goes on. It goes on to say that public participation will mean, quote:

A substantial sum of money could be raised. The government would be able to take advantage of large industrial projects if private infusion is substantial. The province could be in a better position to avoid long-term debt for the Consolidated Fund with a consequent reduction in interest costs (and so on, and so on).

Now those are some pretty, pretty powerful arguments in favour of public participation, and they are arguments that I can certainly support. The document, Mr. Speaker, is dated January 14, 1982, and among the many NDP notables, the name of the member for Regina North East is prominent.

I'm referring to the minutes of the Crown investments corporation, agenda item 6, decision — decision. Note that word, Mr. Speaker, decision — not discussion, not proposition, but decision. In 1982 the NDP decided — they didn't just talk about it, they decided — to engage in a program of selling shares to the public, what they now refer to as privatization, but then called SHAR — share? — which stands for Saskatchewan Holding and Reinvestment.

The decision also included a list of possible privatization targets, Mr. Speaker. And on that list we find the NDP were recommending the privatization of natural gas reserves. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker, imagine that. We've accepted their advice.

They recommended selling shares also in the potash corporation, and we'll be accepting their advice again, Mr. Speaker.

They listed PAPCO, Mr. Speaker, and as you know, we took their advice on that one too.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — The NDP wanted to sell shares in Ipsco,



Prairie Malt, SED Systems, the Cornwall Centre, and other companies, Mr. Speaker. They had a broad privatization agenda, and I say to the members opposite, you were right then and you're wrong now — wrong again.

This is a change of heart that is a mistaken one. Public participation is not a partisan issue; it's not a question of one political party over another. It's an idea that even socialist governments around the world are engaging in, and indeed, as we now clearly see, it's a policy that the former NDP government embraced in a large and whole-hearted way.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you might say that once is a fluke, they didn't really mean it. Well let me quote from another document, Mr. Speaker, preferred share certificate:

The corporation has been involved in discussion with the Department of Finance regarding the possibility of issuing a debt security to allow the public to invest in the potash enterprise.

I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that the corporation was going to issue preferred shares to the potash enterprise, or in the potash enterprise, and this is from the minutes of SEDCO board of directors meeting, April 15, 1976.

Well you might say that they had considered it and rejected it. But, Mr. Speaker, if you look at SEDCO's December 6, 1979 minutes — three years later — you will find that they not only did not reject it, but they indeed expanded it. From considering preferred shares in the potash corporation, they went to a broad-based issue called participating notes — participating notes.

These participating notes, Mr. Speaker, would be issued for, and I quote, "targeted resource Crown corporations." In their targeting, the NDP specified the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation). Under the heading of advantages, this is what the NDP document has to say:

The money would be raised locally, and residents would be able to invest in Saskatchewan resource developments.

I think I've heard that before. Well, they were right, Mr. Speaker, and for the following three years they fleshed out their plan, pulled it out of SEDCO, and decided to set up this thing called SHAR. And I remind you that the minutes of the meeting called the decision to privatize a decision — not a thought, not an idea, but a decision.

Mr. Speaker, today we hear the member from Riversdale saying such plans are directly from Margaret Thatcher. I pose the question: does he know this because that's where they got their plans from? I really wonder.

So what happened to give the Leader of the Opposition yet another change of heart, Mr. Speaker? When he was in power, he supported public participation; now he's opposed. Again, I invite him to come to my constituency, to come to Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and debate these questions. Let's tell the truth. Let's tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and let's let the people decide — let

them decide again.

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech contains some extremely important commitments to the people of Saskatchewan, because this government truly cares, and it's planning for the future. It cares about health and education, it cares about the poor, it cares about the sick and the aged. It truly cares, but it also acts. The community care program will benefit smaller centres throughout the province, and I am hopeful that the program will have a full and positive impact in the communities I represent. I care about those communities, I care about my neighbours, and we have a plan to show them how much we care.

I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that this government, far from closing down hospitals, is building more than ever, and I'm grateful, I'm very grateful to this government and the Minister of Health for the recent announcement of an integrated facility for Lafleche. No hospitals have closed, not one, and one community is already planning, it's planning a new facility for the future. We care, but we also act.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — This government's record on health care is a positive one, and it's a record that this throne speech makes clear we will continue to expand. I cannot question the NDP's policy on health care, Mr. Speaker, because no one really knows what that policy is.

I listened to the hon. member's remarks last night, and I congratulate him on recognizing the International Women's Day. The PC government not only recognizes it, but also showed it cared. It cares, it cares for the women of Saskatchewan. A new screening program for early detection of breast cancer will be designed. This government truly cares, but it also acts.

And frankly, that is not the only area, that's not the only area that leaves the people of this province curious and curious about the member from Riversdale and his idea about leadership. I represent rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I represent rural Saskatchewan, and the many families that depend on ranching and farming for their well-being.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Riversdale refuses, he absolutely refuses to bring forward any policy on agriculture. He has had time; he's had lots of time. He has had all kinds of advice and all kinds of study. He says he cares. He says he really cares, but what does he offer, Mr. Speaker? What does he offer? He still refuses to tell the people what he might do.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I understand that it's the job of opposition to criticize, and it's the job of opposition to oppose. I understand criticism, and I expect that criticism, and I hope fervently for solid, productive criticism. But a person who has pretensions of becoming a premier surely has an obligation to tell us what he would replace the programs he opposes with. If he cares, he should. The people can't wait. We know that. Yet the opposition still says he cares. He says he cares, but does he?

He doesn't like our interest rate protection program for

families. Fair enough, Mr. Speaker. So what does he propose instead? Yell at Ottawa? He can yell at Ottawa until the chickens come home to roost, and all the while people will be losing their homes and their farms. These same families who need help need more than talk and sympathy from one who pretends to care. They need action.

(1500)

We protect families by putting a nine and three-quarters ceiling on mortgage payments, and the Leader of the Opposition suggests yelling at Ottawa is more effective. The member from Riversdale opposes welfare reform, which the throne speech indicates will be expanded and improved, yet he still has the nerve enough to say that he cares.

Well it's acceptable for him not to like it. So what would he do instead? Simply giving more money is not a policy; it's a cop-out from having to deal with the problem. The Leader of the NDP says he's changed his mind about everything from public participation to Meech Lake. Fine and good, but what are the alternatives? You watch, Mr. Speaker, the voting pattern of the NDP on my motion.

The throne speech proposes to increase the number of nurses in Saskatchewan. It proposes to increase the number of nurses in Saskatchewan. It proposes to bring university-level education to my constituents in their own homes. It proposes to make a serious frontal assault on the tragedy of illiteracy and the tragedy of students dropping out of school. It proposes, Mr. Speaker, to bring forward a thoughtful agenda of legislation for families in Saskatchewan, including our most worthy members of society, children without parents.

And how do you think the member from Riversdale is going to vote on this throne speech? He's going to vote against those children, Mr. Speaker. He's going to vote against the nurses, Mr. Speaker. He's going to vote against the attack on illiteracy, against higher education for rural Saskatchewan, against protection for the mentally disabled, against everything, Mr. Speaker, against everything — the people that he says he cares for. He's going to vote no, and he will not suggest one positive alternative. Yet he says he cares. And by his action he's voting against the people of Saskatchewan and against the people of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sworn to defending the interests of those people, and with the formal motion I'm making today, I'm really telling the Leader of the Opposition that he cannot say no to our people, that we are saying no to him, just as the people of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg said no in December.

Listen to his speech, Mr. Speaker, examine it carefully to see if there is one policy suggestion, one specific thing, even a general idea of what he suggests for policy and all the areas he will be voting no on. Don't hold your breath. Please don't hold your breath, Mr. Speaker, while you listen.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud indeed to stand before you today. And I must turn my attention for a moment to the

many people whom I owe thanks. I want to say on the record I am very grateful indeed to the people of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg for their support and their trust.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — I'm grateful, Mr. Speaker, to those intrepid souls who worked so hard to see this day come true. I'm grateful to my colleagues in the House for their tremendous support, their tremendous support and effort that they put forth on my behalf, and to the members opposite for their efforts in the political process. And I'm grateful, Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Opposition. I'm grateful to the Leader of Opposition for the letter he sent out to each voter in my constituency, and I invite him to send other letters just like it any other time he pleases.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — I'm also grateful, Mr. Speaker, to Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, for her fine address to this body. And from that gratitude and in support of my leader, the Premier of Saskatchewan, I therefore move, seconded by the member from Yorkton:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable Sylvia O. Fedoruk.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

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

**Mr. Martens:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like leave to introduce some guests, if I may.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my friend and colleague from the constituency of Shaunavon, I'd like to introduce some guests from Kincaid, Saskatchewan. The member is in Admiral today, opening the school over there, so he's not going to be able to be here. So I'm going to join with you later on for pictures and refreshments.

I want to welcome you here, and on behalf of all of the members here, we hope you have a real good day. And I hope the snow isn't all melted by the time you get home. Thank you very much for coming.

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

## SPECIAL ORDER

## ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

**Mr. McLaren:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me say that as a member of this Legislative Assembly, I consider it a special honour to second the motion in support of the Speech from the Throne. And on behalf of the constituency of Yorkton, I have come here today to deliver a message of confidence in the excellent programs and policies contained in the throne speech, measures that will improve the quality of life and make Saskatchewan a shining example to the rest of Canada.

As the MLA for Yorkton, I welcome the opportunity to speak in support of a government that has such a record of positive achievements in building our province, as we head towards the 1990s and the next century.

In keeping with certain traditions of this Legislative Assembly, I wish to pay respect to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, who came here yesterday for the first time to deliver the Speech from the Throne. I'm sure all members of this Assembly will agree that our province is proud to have such a distinguished representative of Her Majesty the Queen in our Lieutenant Governor.

As we begin this session, the third session of the twenty-first legislature, I wish to reaffirm my confidence in you, Mr. Speaker, and through you, welcome fellow members of the legislature as we commence the business of the province of Saskatchewan.

It is only natural, Mr. Speaker, that as a member I would want to take a few moments to pay special recognition to the constituency I represent and the fine people who live there. The constituency of Yorkton is one that I'm honoured to represent in this Legislative Assembly. The Yorkton constituency is a historic and dynamic part of the province.

Thanks to the vision of our early pioneers who settled the Yorkton area back in the 1880s, the city of Yorkton and surrounding communities are today an important part of this province. Yorkton as a constituency is one of Saskatchewan's leading economic areas.

From the time that Yorkton became a village in 1894, then a town in the 1900s and a city in 1928, the people of my constituency have made a vital contribution to the development of our province. As MLA for Yorkton I am pleased to be working for the best interests of my constituency on the government side in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, before I deal with the actual content of the Speech from the Throne, I wish to single out for recognition the outstanding leadership of the Premier of our province, the hon. member for Estevan. The Premier of Saskatchewan exemplifies the meaning of leadership. The Premier is a man of solid principles, integrity, decency, and honour, who has the courage and conviction to do what is right for Saskatchewan.

Times like these require strong leadership to build and meet the challenges of the future, the kind of outstanding leadership as found in the hon. member for Estevan. And with a respected captain at the helm of the ship of state, Saskatchewan is on the right course.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg is part of the new generation of leadership in this province. He represents a generation that is proud to call this province home and wants to make a contribution in building this province for the future. His victory in the by-election in December symbolized the new generation of change that is taking place all over Saskatchewan.

We heard a message from the people in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg that they wanted to be part of the innovative social and economic policies of this government, a Progressive Conservative government to promote solid growth and prosperity for the future.

I commend the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg for his maiden speech in support of the throne speech and I am proud to welcome him as a member of the Progressive Conservative caucus in this legislature.

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

**Mr. McLaren:** — Mr. Speaker, next year, in 1990, our province will mark its 85th year as a province in Canada. Saskatchewan was founded with the courage and the vision and dedication of pioneers who believed they could make this special part of Canada a model to the rest of the nation.

As we prepare for our 85th anniversary as a province, I am especially proud of the record of this government in its commitment to meeting the challenges to world-wide problems. We live in a rapidly changing world. Saskatchewan is a part of the global economy. As a province we must be at the cutting edge of change. We must manage that change.

The first priority of this government is to maintain Saskatchewan's reputation as a world leader in health care. Time and time again, and it bears repeating, the Premier of this province has given his word that health care is our number one social concern, and this government has kept its word on health care.

History will show that Saskatchewan was the first province in Canada to establish medicare. The record will also show that since this government came into office, health care spending has increased to record highs. With the highest health care budgets in Saskatchewan history, the Progressive Conservative government's commitment to health care is solid.

Mr. Speaker, this government is not going to rest on its laurels of the past; rather, we are going to strengthen our health care system. The Saskatchewan Commission on Directions in Health Care is going to lay the foundation to identify the changes needed for Saskatchewan's future health care needs. And we plan to innovate health care services for the future.

I wish to point out Saskatchewan's new plastic health card that came into effect on the first day of this year. The new plastic health services card is the first of its kind in all of Canada. Health professionals say the card is another example of how Saskatchewan is a leader in health care concerns.

The Saskatchewan Communications Advanced Network, SCAN, as announced in the Speech from the Throne, will deliver distance learning technology to a wide segment of Saskatchewan's population.

In the last few years, there's been a growing awareness with respect to education and, as a result of this public awareness, this government has sought ways to increase parent involvement in the school system. In this session, the Minister of Education will expand on policies designed to improve our education system.

And it should be noted, Mr. Speaker, that this government has, since coming into office, increased public spending for education. Government spending for education has increased in a very substantial way since 1982, and we believe education is the key to the door of economic opportunity. Ever since the days of the one-room school house, which I'm perfectly aware of, we in Saskatchewan have built a proud heritage in education.

Mr. Speaker, children are the product of our education system, and the protection of families and children is the foundation on which this government's agenda is built. In many of his speeches, the Premier has said that no institution is more important than the family. Saskatchewan people value the family way of life.

In 1989 the province of Saskatchewan will host a major national conference on the family. Family life in this province has been enhanced by such measures as mortgage protection, the removal of sales tax on footwear and clothing, the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and quality care for children. Protection plans for families have been a hallmark of this government.

Mr. Speaker, a recent nation-wide poll published by *Maclean's* magazine shows that Canadians put a high priority on the family and child care. And to reaffirm this government's strong ongoing commitment to the family in this session of the legislature, we will see the introduction of the child and family services Act and the children's law Act. These family protection measures will further strengthen the family unit in this province.

Mr. Speaker, seniors are a special part of the family as well. We in Saskatchewan have one of the largest seniors' populations of any province in Canada. Our efforts to protect seniors will continue. Special attention will be given to the changing housing and health care needs of seniors.

This government was the first in North America to introduce a pension plan for home-makers, part-time workers, and the self-employed. The Saskatchewan Pension Plan has met with great public acceptance to the point where the plan has 47,000 members: 80 per cent of them are women; 40 per cent of them are home-makers.

Mr. Speaker, in our efforts to make Saskatchewan a leader in family public policy, your Progressive Conservative government has recognized that quality family life is dependent on such important factors as a strong economy and a clean environment. I wish to take a few moments to address the PC record in building a strong economy and protecting the environment.

Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the state of the Saskatchewan economy. Despite world conditions such as trade wars, despite the conditions of nature such as drought, the Saskatchewan economy is growing in a stable and steady way. Through economic development and diversification, this government is building a prosperous future for our province. As a province that is heavily dependent on domestic and international trade, I am confident that the historic Canada-U.S.A. free trade agreement will mark the beginning of exciting new economic developments for Saskatchewan. As stated in the Speech from the Throne, the free trade agreement is important to Saskatchewan, since almost 40 per cent of Saskatchewan products are sold to our neighbours in the U.S.A.

In the ever-changing global economy, the Pacific Rim has become Saskatchewan's second most important trading partner. This government, through the Premier, has commenced to expand our markets in the Asia-Pacific Rim. Trade is important to the Saskatchewan economy and it is vital to our economic performance in the future.

(1530)

Our Premier, and Minister of Agriculture, is very much aware of how important agriculture is to Saskatchewan. Agriculture has always been the foundation of the provincial economy, and protection of the family farm cannot be overstated. World economic conditions and the North American drought have hurt our farmers; no doubt about it.

And this government has taken strong leadership for the farming sector. Last year we took action to protect farmers, and in this session a new farm finance Act will be introduced, a new department of agriculture and food will be established.

Mr. Speaker, we as a government are proud of our commitment to rural Saskatchewan. No other government in the history of Saskatchewan has done so much for agriculture. Compare that, Mr. Speaker, to the total lack of rural and farm policy on the NDP opposition side of this Assembly. We have a Leader of the Opposition who thinks putting on a cowboy hat backwards and setting up photo opportunities in a farmyard are the way to win over the farm vote.

The NDP has no credibility with farmers. All they worry about is the time that the cheque is going to come. What did you do in 1978-79 and 1980 when you should have been doing something?

They do not trust the man who helped bring in land bank, a leader of a party that does not have one single solitary policy that would help farmers. They are out of touch with rural Saskatchewan, and the results of the by-election in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg prove that.

Mr. Speaker, the agricultural development fund will be strengthened in this session. This government believes agriculture will continue to be vital to our province. Expanded protection for farmers, rural gas, irrigation, individual line service, rural health care are all part of our

commitment to preserving and protecting the rural way of life in this province. Farmers know the record of our Premier and the PC government. When it comes to agriculture, we deliver. The Premier and Minister of Agriculture have provided strong leadership for agriculture in the past, and we will continue to do so in the future.

Mr. Speaker, a strong economy means we must strengthen it through economic diversification. Economic diversification means new jobs in such developments as the 200 million Weyerhaeuser paper mill at Prince Albert, the Regina oil upgrader, and the 1.3 billion heavy oil upgrader to be constructed at Lloydminster.

Public participation is also a key part of this government's economic plan. When this government established the Department of Public Participation, Saskatchewan joined many governments throughout the world who have similar policies. Mr. Speaker, the leader of the NDP and his left-leaning MLAs oppose public participation. They claim it is ideological. That is not the case.

Over 100 countries as diverse as China, a communist country, and Australia, a socialist country, Great Britain and France and Sweden and New Zealand, have all brought in forms of public participation. And indeed, Mr. Speaker, it has come to light that in early 1982 the former premier of this province and the NDP government was about to embark on a plan that would have allowed individuals to purchase shares in the Crown corporations. Now that is the NDP that sits in opposition. They oppose public participation.

It is little wonder the Leader of the Opposition has no credibility. Public participation is designed to increase economic growth, to diversify the economy, and most importantly, to increase public ownership and control of Saskatchewan corporations now or previously owned directly by the government.

Public participation will allow for widespread public involvement through bond offerings, delivery of services through the private sector non-profit organizations, and to employee-owned and -operated companies.

Mr. Speaker, a current example of the success of public participation are the SaskTel bonds. SaskTel bonds are an incentive for Saskatchewan people to directly invest in the provincial economy. The credit tel bond, for example, is the first of its kind in North America. It is an example of this government's commitment to allow people to benefit from public participation. There is no doubt the Progressive Conservative Government of this province has built an excellent reputation in all areas of public participation.

So let's take a look at some of these achievements. The SaskTel, Power bonds, Meadow Lake saw mill sale to employees and Indian bands, Saskatchewan Government Printing services employee take-over, Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation welding services employee take-over, formation and share offering of WESTBRIDGE computer company — these are all highly successful public participation

initiatives.

And now, Mr. Speaker, for the record I wish to point out further positive highlights of the success of public participation. The Saskatchewan Power bonds: over 42,000 Saskatchewan residents purchased them — \$343 million investment. The Meadow Lake saw mill means 400 projected jobs. Weyerhaeuser, the 250 million investment of a world-class paper mill at Prince Albert. Over 700 jobs during the construction of that site, and 169 new jobs, permanent jobs, at the mill. The WESTBRIDGE Computer Corporation, 13.9 million share offering, with most employees buying into the company. Fifty jobs created and 200 projected.

Job creation, new investment, new markets, economic diversification, and growth of all part of the public participation initiatives.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, the NDP and their union leader friends oppose public participation. It is the NDP who are very narrow in their minds. Their approach is state ownership, not public participation. Public participation is part of the future economic growth of Saskatchewan, and through public participation we can secure a more prosperous future for our province.

In this session of the legislature, I am pleased that the government will continue further public participation programs. A sound economy, a strong economy bodes well for the future of Saskatchewan.

And in building a better quality of life, we must protect our environment as well, Mr. Speaker. A clean and safe environment is a prime concern of this government. Clean air, safe drinking water, protection from toxic wastes, pollution, and the so-called greenhouse effect, are among the many environmental concerns.

Protection of the environment depends on the active participation of this government. Saskatchewan's PC government has an impressive environmental protection record. The government of this province has been sensitive to the protection of the environment, and the result has been an impressive array of environmental protection measures.

Saskatchewan is a leader in a number of environmental protection initiatives. Saskatchewan's institutional chemical collection program is unique in North America. The program was initiated to remove the backlog of unwanted or deteriorated hazardous chemicals from schools and hospitals. Three hundred and fourteen institutions were visited, and over 15,000 kilograms of chemicals were removed. Our province has the only container collection program in Canada that has operated successfully in Canada over the last four years.

In May of 1988, Saskatchewan established the aluminum beverage container collection and recycling system. The Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres was given the contract to develop a can collection system. A 2 cent environmental fee is collected for each can to help fund the system. This collection system operated by the handicapped is a system unique to Saskatchewan. There is no system like it in North America, Mr. Speaker.

Water quality is important to this province, and the provincial Environment department has designed guides for sewage works and waterworks that are considered by environment professionals to be the best in Canada.

Saskatchewan is responsible for regulating the largest uranium industry in the world, and our province has responded by establishing a regulatory program that is capable of providing a degree of environmental protection at uranium mines that is as good or better than any other regulatory program in the world.

Compare that to the PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) cover-up during the NDP years, Mr. Speaker — their total lack of commitment to the environment. Now the member from Riversdale, the Leader of the Opposition at the time, who was part of the PCB cover-up, he wants to pretend to be a protector of the environment. Can we believe him? I think not.

This government has been, and continues to be, committed to the protection of the environment, and a clean and safe environment is a lasting legacy we want to pass on to our children.

The Speech from the Throne is the legislative blueprint for the government. It sets out our course for the future. Compare the Speech from the Throne, the past and present record of this government, to the total lack of direction of the NDP, an opposition trapped by radical, left-wing MLAs and a 1960 ideology.

It is a known fact that the New Democratic Party is a member of the Socialist International. Socialism is an ideology that people who believe in free enterprise, economic growth, and prosperity reject. Left-wing radicals of the Saskatchewan NDP want to take that party in this province towards more socialism. The member from Regina Rosemont wants more socialistic policy; so does the member from Saskatoon Sutherland. That member from Saskatoon has publicly stated, and I quote: "We have not been true and consistent to our socialist principles." More Crown corporations, state ownership, land bank, the rejected policies of the past; that is where the Saskatchewan NDP is heading.

The voters in two elections and the recent by-election in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg sent the NDP a message: we don't want to go down the road to socialism; we don't want to turn left. Our Premier, this government, represent a generation of leadership, a generation concerned about jobs, quality of health, education, economic opportunity, the future of farming, and the family. That's what this government is all about.

It's a government that has built and continues to build a first-class health care system; a government that protects the family farm. We are a government that puts a high priority on jobs, economic opportunity, and building for the future. And that kind of government is what the people of Saskatchewan want, Mr. Speaker.

When I decided to enter public life and I was elected MLA for Yorkton, I did so because I share the values and the beliefs and the principles of our Premier and his vision for Saskatchewan.

We started in 1982 to clean up the mess left by 10 years of the NDP and put Saskatchewan back on track. We have produced record economic growth and development for our province. Over the past few years, this province has consistently had the lowest unemployment in Canada. Through competent and effective leadership, we have built a stronger Saskatchewan, and these are the facts.

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

**Mr. McLaren:** — As far as I was concerned, Saskatchewan in 1981, the last year of the NDP, was sick. Well we came into office and brought the province back to good health, and now it's stronger than ever. That's the difference, Mr. Speaker.

The debates in this legislature are about ideas and values. The Speech from the Throne represents the ideals and values of the Progressive Conservative Government of Saskatchewan. Our values include family, community, and co-operation.

We are guided by certain Saskatchewan traditions — building, working together, and the sense of community. We are a province of communities working together, a leader in health care, in education, in agriculture, in protection of the environment, and helping families. Those are the values of the people in the Yorkton constituency, the folks who elected me to this legislature. And I, on their behalf, am proud to stand up for those ideas as stated in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, this government will keep Saskatchewan moving forward, ever forward, through progressive and innovative policies. And, Mr. Speaker, that is what leadership is all about — the will and the vision to build for the future.

And so, Mr. Speaker, it is with a sense of good, old-fashioned pride that I second the motion in support of the Speech from the Throne.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Members of the Legislative Assembly, I want to tell you that I am excited and optimistic about this session of the legislature. It's been nine long months almost since the members of the opposition have been denied the opportunity to hold the government to account to the various misdeeds and wasted activities and missed opportunities and mismanagement. Nine months where the Minister of Education has been afraid — dead-scared afraid — to face the opposition in this Saskatchewan legislature to answer for his . . . (inaudible) . . .

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Nine months, Mr. Speaker, where the Conservatives and the Premier have been in hiding. In hiding whether it's in China, or in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg — I'll say a word about that in a moment — hiding in Ottawa; hiding under their tables; hiding in the cabinet room; hiding away from the press; setting up the biggest security mechanism outside in the

main Legislative Building; hiding from the people of the province of Saskatchewan. Nine months. They can run and they can hide, but they can't escape the day of accountability. It is here in this legislative session.

So I'm looking forward to that very much, Mr. Speaker, because I think the people of Saskatchewan want to know more details about where it is that this administration has led this province. They want to know more of the details of their various deals, their private deals, their friendship or relationships whereby certain friends of the government have benefitted and certain other privileged few have profited, and they have in fact advanced in society while the rest of us, working people and farming people and small-business people, somehow tend to be ignored.

So we're going to be addressing that and we're going to be asking the government to account for its actions. And we're going to be doing something more than that, Mr. Speaker. We're going to be advancing, in the weeks and the months ahead, a set of proposals for the reform of the Legislative Assembly, for the reform of the democratic institutions which, if we have our way, will guarantee that come the next government, an NDP government, never ever again will any future government be able to stymie democracy and the voice of the ordinary people — that the people will be heard.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — So I welcome the opportunity to come back.

Now I must also say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I welcome to work with you, sir, as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I think you do a very good job under very difficult circumstances. And for my part and those of my colleagues, we will give you all the support that we can in the course of what will undoubtedly be some rather exciting debates in this coming session. So we welcome your return, sir, and we pledge our co-operation to you.

I also say a word to the new member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I say to the new member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, congratulations on your election to this Assembly. I think it is very important . . .

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — I think it is very important recognition and a successful act by yourself on an individual basis, for your friends and supporters who worked so hard to get you elected. And really I think I speak now to all of the members, notwithstanding our differences and our partisanship and sometimes the heated nature of our debates, to serve in this Assembly is indeed a rare and high privilege. In a sense, it is a trust — a trust that we have to honour as best as we can. And I don't say this by way of a lecture; I just simply say that it is, in my judgement, a club, an exclusive club that you've joined. I wish you well and congratulate you on your victory, and I think you made a good maiden speech a few moments ago.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, about the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, I must also say that I was a bit

disappointed in some of the directions that he took in his speech. I attribute this to the fact that he is a first-time member delivering a first-time address, and that in reality somebody else perhaps prepared the written text which he read, and was a little bit uncomfortable . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I don't . . . In which case I think he was . . . well I think he was uncomfortable in delivering it. You could tell, in the tone and the tenor of the remarks. And I am a little bit disappointed in this regard.

And I would say to the hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg — and I don't say this in any political or partisanship terms to the hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg — if you look around you and about you, you will see in the back benches tens of bodies, bodies which have atrophied, bodies which have decided that there is no hope, no future, except to sing the Hallelujah Chorus when the conductor in the front row asks those members to sing the Hallelujah Chorus.

Now what you must do, member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, is to resist that kind of direction and control. What you must do is to get up and to speak firmly and decisively and positively for the voters in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and to deliver on all those promises that you made in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — And, as we know, there were numerous promises in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. They ranged from a new seniors' complex at Rockglen, which, as I understand it, will have a bowling alley in it and moving pictures and swimming pools. And we have the promise of the Gravelbourg hospital and we also have promises to improve the Assiniboia Hospital. And of course the roads, as the hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg knows best of all, those more than anything perhaps, need as much repair. All of these promises, sir, we know that you will maintain and that you will deliver and that you will do so with independence and integrity.

Let me give you just one last piece of advice if I can. If you are going to do it, do not join the Hallelujah Chorus. Be your own person. Be independent. Be intelligent. Be honest and straightforward. Don't follow the back-benchers of the Conservatives. We'll give you support and help if the people of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg can be improved. Please, though, reject these sort of canned speeches that your speech writers from Toronto give you. Otherwise, none of these promises will be fulfilled. I think if you do that you will succeed.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg also talked about the theme of the Conservatives. I think he used the word, we care. The line was, we care.

**An Hon. Member:** — What about your letter?

**Mr. Romanow:** — I'm going to come to my letter in just a moment. He said, we care. And do you know something, Mr. Speaker, I say to the hon. member from

Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and to the very vociferous, but from a seated position, Minister of Education, they're right; Conservatives, they do care. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, that they don't care for the ordinary farmers and workers and small-business people in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — No, Mr. Speaker, they care. You know they care for Peter Pocklington. They care so much that they give him \$21 million of our taxpayers' dollars when we could be using it to building the hospital in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. That's how much they care. Yes, they care.

You know, Mr. Speaker, they care so much that they give Weyerhaeuser, a Seattle, American corporation, a deal which permits them not to pay back a penny on the purchase price of the P.A. plant — not a penny on that purchase price unless the profits are over a certain percentage. But the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan, of course, are asked to pay the \$25 production loan, and by the way, with increased interest rates. Yes, the Conservatives, they care. They care for Peter Pocklington; they care for Weyerhaeuser.

You know, Mr. Speaker, they also care . . . they care for George Hill and they care for Paul Schoenhals and they care for Jack Cennon and they care for John Gormley and they care for Mr. Archambault; and they care for tens and tens and tens of defeated Conservative candidates. They care for every one of them in the probably highest level of political patronage that this province has ever seen. Yes you care, but you don't care for the people of the province of Saskatchewan; you care for your own friends.

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

(1545)

**Mr. Romanow:** — I tell you, that's for whom they care. But I tell you for whom they do not care, Mr. Speaker. They do not care for the Hon. Minister of Education from Weyburn, second highest rate of poverty in all of Canada — not my statistics, but Statistics Canada. Second highest rate of poverty in all of Canada, in this province, for children; second highest rate of poverty for families in all of Canada in this province.

This is the bread basket of the world. It used to be the bread basket of the world. Not a word in the Speech from the Throne about the poor and the working poor in this province. Why? Because they care all right, but not for the poor. They care for the big corporations and their friends and their supporters. That's for whom they care.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Oh yes, oh yes, Mr. Speaker, they say they care; we care. Did you notice, Mr. Speaker — I think you did notice; it was a stunning observation.

Yesterday was Speech from the Throne day, but it was also the day when International Women's Day was to be marked. International Women's Day, the day when

there's a struggle for the advancement of women's issues and women's causes, ranging all the way from questions of pay equity to child care — let alone those issues — to issues on a broader basis of family, worry about the future of their children, their sons and their daughters. Are they going to get an education? Are they going to get good health care? This is International Women's Day, a major event which is being celebrated all over the world — all over the world, Mr. Speaker — but this government cares so much that it didn't even mention a word about International Women's Day. I say that is an outrage and an affront to every woman in Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Oh yes, Mr. Speaker, they care. Peter Pocklington, he's been looked after; Weyerhaeuser, they've been looked after; Gormley and Hill and the whole gang, they've been looked after. They care, but not a word about women's issues and those things which concern themselves about the family.

Now the hon. member from Yorkton gets up and he says, you know, this government's concerned about the family. I want to tell you, this government is the enemy of the family in this province of Saskatchewan — the enemy.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — And I'll tell you how it is an enemy. It's not because they purposefully set out to destroy the family — I do not attribute those motives to any of my friends and colleagues on that side — but they're the enemy to the families because their policies in economic matters or social matters are not designed one iota to be of genuine help to the families.

When the families needed assistance on the dental care program, for example — that's a family-based program — how much did those people care for the families? They did away with the dental care program, and right then and there damaged what is so important and essential in one aspect of care for family life.

When they concerned themselves on the drug plan, did they think about the family when they chopped out the drug plan, and by that one stroke attacked all of those who need prescription care and all of those who need health care? That's how much they care for the family.

Did they think for one moment about the statistics that show 1,600 people, approximately, a month, Mr. Speaker — 1,600 people a month — families, leaving this province of Saskatchewan? Did they even mention that in the Speech from the Throne? Did they even set out an economic game plan to get those people working? — not a word! I say to you, Mr. Speaker, this is not a government that cares about the family, this is a government that has forgotten the Saskatchewan family, and it's going to take us to get it back.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Forgotten about the family, forgotten about these important issues that I've talked of: family issues, women's issues. They've forgotten about the



ordinary people. This is a government which is so tired, so bushed, so run-down, this Speech from the Throne I didn't think could be topped by anything more anaemic, to be very frank with you, than with the addresses that we've received — with the exception of the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, because it's his first address — the anaemic addresses following the Speech from the Throne, I didn't think you could get any more tired out and bushed out. This government is lost, Mr. Speaker.

You know, it's third down in this province of Saskatchewan right now. It's third down. We've got major economic challenges. We've got long yardage to go. It's third down and the quarter-back has forgotten the plays. He doesn't know what to tell the caucus in the huddle. And the wide receivers are offside and the line-backers are tired and they're not able to move, and the team is simply sitting there, decrepit and stalled.

This government is so worn out and so tired, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, it's time now for a change of new government and new direction, and that's what we're going to give this province of Saskatchewan right now.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — You know, they keep coming back, Mr. Speaker, to the same old issues about being world-class and first-class, and they've got to look to the future while people are voting with their feet and fleeing at 1,400 and 1,600 people a month. Oh, and they talk about privatization and they say that we're opposed to privatization. I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, what we're opposed to. We are opposed to PC-style privatization, I'll tell you that.

**An Hon. Member:** — What does that mean? What is it?

**Mr. Romanow:** — We're opposed to PC-style privatization which . . . Oh no, the member from Weyburn says what does he mean about it. I'll tell you what it means. It means the privatization of government buildings, for example, in sweetheart lease arrangements; privatized government facilities in leased government buildings to private entrepreneurs for fat contracts so that the friends of this government can make a profit.

And the member from Yorkton who spoke just before me is a defender of privatization. This session is going to look very carefully at a privatized deal in Yorkton to see whether or not that's to the advantage of the people of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — That's PC privatization, Mr. Speaker. We're going to take a look at PC-style privatization where there are all kinds of deals made with respect to the computer companies, to WESTBRIDGE Computer — made without tender; made without any public information; confidential medical information in the hands of private entrepreneurs for the first time in the history of Saskatchewan. Those are the people that are going to benefit. We're going to talk about PC-style privatization in that regard.

We're going to talk about PC-style privatization when they privatized the oats from the Canadian Wheat Board, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I'll surrender my spot. I'll let the Minister of Health tell me if that's not privatization. Does the member for Meadow Lake say that's not privatization? I'll surrender my spot if he tells me it's not privatization. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, as far as I'm concerned, I will stay here and stand here and listen to their laughs on that.

And frankly I wish that they would laugh loudly — loudly — to confirm to the farmers exactly what you feel about this move. I'm going to want to hear your laughs so that the member from Kelvington, when his farmers are told that he does not at all care about the Canadian Wheat Board, that he's for this privatization of oats, that he is for this kind of an action — I want this group to stand up and laugh.

You tell me about that. I want the member from Kelvington-Wadena to get up in this debate and tell the Legislative Assembly, to tell the Canadian legislature, this legislature and Canada, that he believes in the privatization of oats. I mean, I feel, Mr. Speaker, that this laughter tells you everything that you want to know about PC-style privatization.

Their argument is, you see, you've got to take oats out of the Canadian Wheat Board because the volume is so small it doesn't make any difference, is their argument.

Well if volume is the test, Mr. Speaker, why is it that canola and flax-seed isn't within the Canadian Wheat Board where the volumes are greater? If volume is the test, why doesn't the Minister of Agriculture and every one of those free enterprise, big business Tories advocate that kind of a development with the Canadian Wheat Board? Why is it that they are silent, Mr. Speaker? Why is it that the Canadian Wheat Board Advisory Committee condemned them and urged the resignation of their minister? And they still laugh.

I say to these members opposite, your arrogance — your arrogance — is only surpassed by the stupidity of your agricultural policies, and you'll pay the price come the next election.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Yes, we're going to be examining PC-style privatization in some detail, Mr. Speaker. We're going to be examining PC-style privatization, and we're going to be asking ourselves the question: is this a government which is so ideologically committed now and blinkered and blinded by Maggie Thatcher on privatization that it can't do anything else? That it forgets about the drought payments? That it forgets about those waiting to get into hospitals? That it forgets about those who want to go to school? Is this a government which is so preoccupied with privatization that it has essentially forgotten the little guy? He's forgotten. This Premier and this government has forgotten the small-business person.

We're going to be examining P. C. privatization in absolutely close detail, Mr. Speaker, I guarantee you that.

And when they say we're against privatization — this kind of incompetence and mismanagement and patronage and waste — yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be against it. Make no mistake about that.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to adjourn because I want to have the bulk of my remarks to be made when the debate resumes which, as I understand it, is on Monday.

But I do want to say a word about health care, and I do want to say this notion about health care being the priority of the current administration — the number one priority is what they say in the Speech from the Throne. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, if there's anything worth a laugh — except that it's a cruel joke, it's a cruel laugh — it's that.

To listen to the member from Yorkton, to listen to the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, to listen to the Minister of Health talk about being the defenders of health care is a sick joke.

Mr. Speaker, in 1962 the people of the province of Saskatchewan fought for medicare, Mr. Speaker, in 1962. I know who were on the front lines of that battle in medicare in 1962. I know that Tommy Douglas of our party was there. I know that Woodrow Lloyd was the leader, and he was there. I know that Al Blakeney was there. I know that Orville Hjertaas was there. I know Roy Atkinson was there. I know a legion of CCF and non-CCF and non-New Democratic Party people who were there fighting for the principle of medicare and hospitalization. I was there, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you.

And I also know who was not there. I know who was not there, and I know who fought it. I know the member from Yorkton fought it. He was a member of the KOD (Keep Our Doctors) and he fought it. I know that the member from Saskatoon fought it, Saskatoon Mayfair fought it. I don't know if he was a member of the KOD, but he fought it. I know that the members in the back rows fought it. They took this action to court. They fought it politically. They fostered a doctor's strike.

I know that the leading Conservative in this province, Dr. Staff Barootes, fought it. Senator Staff Barootes opposes it to this day; he opposes medicare and hospitalization. And they have the gall to say that they are defenders of medicare, Mr. Speaker — shame to them. They do not know anything about medicare.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — I tell you, there were others who fought it as well, others in the medical establishment who fought it all the way. And the leadership of this Conservative Party, including a member from education, the Premier, they fought it, they fought it, and make no mistake about it, and they spoke against it.

And I tell you, it shouldn't surprise us, not only because they fought against it, it shouldn't surprise us that now they're launching a massive attack on health care. We shouldn't be surprised that they talk about utilization

rates going up. This is nothing new. They talked about utilization rates going up in 1962, and so the Liberal Party put on deterrent fees, and now they're talking about it in 1989. It shouldn't be new that they destroyed the drug plan. It shouldn't be new that they destroyed the school-based children's dental plan. It shouldn't be new that there are 10,000 people waiting to get into a hospital bed. None of this should be new because those people believe in the free enterprise system of health care; they don't believe in medicare and hospitalization. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, and I tell the Premier of this province, this party will never, ever, ever get the trust of Saskatchewan when it comes to health care. That is precedent here.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a system of reports which advocate the closure of small hospitals which they quickly deny, falsely deny; a series of reports by people like Schwartz, who to this day still defends the government in its autocratic imposition of specializations on Saskatoon hospitals. The Schwartz report, my letter . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . yes, signed by . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order.

(1600)

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I know that the government opposite is very allergic to truth, and you can tell that by the squeals and the howls of pain.

Mr. Speaker, I'll talk more about this on Monday. But I'll tell you, a page and a half on health care — a page and a half on health care — by the wrecking crew, by the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I'd ask the hon. members, and I just asked them about five seconds ago to not interrupt, and therefore . . . and also it applies to people on my left and people on my right. It applies to everybody in the House, and I ask all members to allow the Leader of the Opposition to continue his speech.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate you, Mr. Speaker, holding the floor so that I can get my piece out. I'm not really surprised by this reaction on health care. I'm not surprised about it because that's exactly what they did in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and that's exactly what they'll be doing to their last political day, 1989 or 1990 or 1991. Anybody who would entrust this government to medicare would put Colonel Saunders in charge of the chicken coop. Any people that would entrust this government to medicare and hospitalization based on their record, their silence on the drug patent laws, would entrust themselves to the destruction of medicare.

Look: "Health premiums favoured by Tories," December 22, 1987; "Return of medicare premiums urged by Moose Jaw Tories," Joan Duncan . . . quote — I'm not saying your name; I'm reading a quote. Quote:

Duncan said the government looked at reinstating premiums as a way . . . (et cetera) If there's strong support, she says, those premiums are going to be

back on.

That's around. That's not 1982 or before 1982; that's today. Right there, that's where she sits, right to the left of the Minister of Health. They don't deny it. They don't deny it.

I don't expect, Mr. Speaker, that they would introduce deterrent fees or premiums between now and the next coming election. I don't think that even these people are prepared to commit that blatant political suicide. But you mark my words, Mr. Speaker. Win, lose or draw this next election, if these people should win the next provincial election, mark my words. They will unleash the most savage attack on medicare under the guise of efficiency and deterrent fees and premiums ever in the history of the province of Saskatchewan, I guarantee you that.

And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, why. I say that, Mr. Speaker, because these are privatizers. They believe in it; they believe in the United Kingdom model; they believe in what Maggie Thatcher is doing in privatizing health. They believe in it, but I'll tell you something else, Mr. Speaker: not only do they believe in it; they believe in applying a corporate test to health care and hospitalization.

In the Speech from the Throne, they say: utilization has gone up for medicare and hospitalization. And they say that as if somehow we ought to be afraid that utilization goes up. What's wrong with the people of Saskatchewan using health care? It's there for them to be used. What's wrong with that?

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Oh, the argument is, it's abused and we've got to have a control on it. Well we have to have a control on it. Who do we blame, Mr. Speaker? Do we blame the sick person, the patient? Or do we blame the doctors, who are the gatekeepers to the system? Why are you picking on the public? Why are you suggesting the premiums? Why don't you go back to your friends, Dr. Barootes and all of those KOD who write your agriculture and health policies and the economic policies of this party; why don't you go back to them and say, look here, get a hold of this situation the proper way?

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we're going to be talking about privatization, and we're going to be talking about health care, and we're going to be talking about this government because, as I take my place, this is what I see this session being all about. This is the agenda.

The agenda is this, Mr. Speaker. Number one, the people of this province want to make a judgement on the record of this government. That's what democracy's about. It is the question of determining whether or not the government has fulfilled its promises, kept the faith, established that trust. We're going to be examining that record of this government in detail in this session. That's agenda item number one. A record which goes from increased taxes to broken promises to cut-backs in health care and education to abandonment of the family farms as we know, that is the agenda, first and foremost.

And the second agenda, Mr. Speaker, is going to be the

development of a better way — a way which gives people the feeling that there's a new day coming, that there is hope, that we can build a society based on opportunity and security and compassion and fairness and co-operation; that we can give our small communities and our farmers and our small-business people a chance to really control their own lives and have control over their individual lives and family life and community life. That is going to be the other side of the agenda.

And by that kind of a yardstick, Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne will take us back to the future. This is a Speech of the Throne worthy of the Anderson Conservatives of the 1930s. It's time to defeat this government. It's time to get on with building a new tomorrow, and I'm going to be talking about that when I get a chance next week around.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:07 p.m.