

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, 17 individuals who are here as participants in the Western Career Assignment Program. They are here in their capacity as civil servants in the provincial governments of western Canada and the federal Government of Canada, and also the Territories of Canada. These 17 individuals seated in the Speaker's gallery, are participating in a 10-week course that enhances their skills as professional civil servants.

I have had the opportunity of meeting with them, discussing with them the role of provincial cabinet ministers and the role of politicians in general. I've tried to give them some advice in trying to outlast and outsurvive those of us who are politicians who come and go. They are like the land and the trees — they will be here for ever. And they must give some continuity to the government of this country. They are a very enthusiastic group of individuals, very capable, very intelligent, and very diligent.

They are here with their program co-ordinators, Mr. Ted Reddekopp and Mr. Ron Harris. They have had the occasion of having lunch with Her Honour at Government House. And their program this year is being hosted and based in Saskatoon for the duration of the 10-week course. So I ask the members here to welcome and show respect to these civil servants from western Canada and the Government of Canada.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Population Loss in Saskatchewan

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Premier, and it has to do with the statistics prepared by his own bureau of statistics which reveal, shockingly so, Mr. Premier, today, that in the month of February of 1989 Saskatchewan suffered a net population loss, Mr. Speaker, a net population loss of 6,261 people, all in one month. Now this is the worst exodus in any one month since the Dirty Thirties, since the last time that we had a PC government in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier is as follows: in the light of this massive hemorrhage, in the light of what is obviously a very serious situation, does he agree with me that this requires emergency action by the government? Do you have such an emergency game plan to stem this out-migration, and if you do, will you please provide the House and the people of Saskatchewan with the details of this plan today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that the population of the province of Saskatchewan increased over a million people for the first time in history during our administration.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Now it had never done that in the history of Saskatchewan. It did it, Mr. Speaker, particularly as a result of the programs initiated by the province of Saskatchewan and a buoyant agriculture and some buoyant commodities.

I also say to the hon. member, as he knows, that we have had some severe and significant financial problems in rural Saskatchewan. As a result of that, we find that net farm income in Saskatchewan has almost collapsed as a result of drought, \$2 wheat, and high interest rates. And he knows that the population of rural Saskatchewan is suffering as a result of those conditions. The city of Saskatoon is growing; the city of Regina is growing; the city of Moose Jaw is growing. The cities are increasing, Mr. Speaker, but the problem is rural Saskatchewan.

Also notice that the statistics point out that net income in the province of Saskatchewan is low compared to other provinces. Well when you have zero farm income, it has quite an impact on the net and on the average, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have gone to the federal government and gone to the provincial government and gone to our treasuries so in fact, Mr. Speaker, we can provide cash, literally billions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Saskatchewan, particularly in the rural, because those are the people that have been suffering.

Now we step in, in terms of high interest rates; we step in, in terms of cash; we provide low interest loans; we have a combination of things that we're doing to support agriculture because it is the rural people that are having trouble finding the jobs. In urban Saskatchewan we see the growth continue, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier, and I find it passing strange that the members of the cabinet and the back-benchers would actually applaud that kind of an answer in the light of this serious statistical situation, because what the Premier has done is he has admitted to this House and to the province of Saskatchewan the total and abject failure of his department's agricultural policies, given those statistics.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this is not the first time that the province of Saskatchewan experiences this kind of cyclical up and down, that there have been droughts in the past and difficulties in the past, and in view of the fact that this has happened in previous occasions; also in view of the fact that nearly 40 to 50 per cent of that 6,000 group that has left the province are young men and women, the future of our province, between the ages of 15 and 29, can the Premier stop the

rhetoric, and I'm asking you sincerely, get up and tell us a specific game plan as to what he's got in mind as a government — you're the government — to keep these jobs and these young people at home and have the people of Saskatchewan stay here at home? What's your game plan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has admitted that he doesn't have an agricultural policy; he knows that land bank didn't work; he knows that foreclosures on farmers haven't worked; and he knows that the people of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg just sent him a message that says the NDP don't have an agricultural policy.

Mr. Speaker, we have put literally billions of dollars of taxpayers' money into rural Saskatchewan — rural gas distribution system, interest rate protection programs, individual line service, community development corporations, cash advances, Mr. Speaker; feeder associations, livestock combinations, Mr. Speaker, as well as the complete infrastructure in education and health care — new integrated units, Mr. Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition stands up and says he doesn't have an agriculture policy. He admits that he hasn't had one. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, we are committed to rural Saskatchewan, we hold most of the seats in rural Saskatchewan and just got another one, just got another one in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg on the basis of agriculture, Mr. Speaker. I say to the hon. member, he could at least, to be fair, acknowledge the drought, acknowledge high interest rates, and I certainly wouldn't be encouraging banks to be foreclosing on people because of high interest rates. That hurts rural people; 20 per cent interest rates hurt them. He didn't do anything; we will, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a new question, because I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that answer by the Premier is actually a pathetic message of no hope. That answer by the Premier is a political polemic which is cold comfort for the 6,300 people who have left this province in the month of February alone. Mr. Premier, that is equal the size of the population of the city of Melfort in one month.

Now look, I'm going to ask you again. Stop the political rhetoric. You tell this legislature and the people of the province of Saskatchewan in the face of a crisis what it is that your government plans to introduce by way of emergency programs for the young and for those who are forced to leave this province because of your policies. What are your answers? What game plan do you have? Don't give us the speeches, give us results.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Conference Board of Canada has said that with the diversification going on in Saskatchewan and with reasonable moisture, we're looking at leading the nation in economic growth

across Canada, 8 or 9 per cent economic growth for 1989-1990. The conference board predicts . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The conference board says, with any reasonable crop so that we have a base in agriculture, we will create 13,000 new jobs in 1989 and 15,000 brand-new jobs in 1990. Now I say to the hon. member, I am not, I am not, Mr. Speaker, against upgraders; I'm not against Weyerhaeuser; I not against trade; I'm not against business. I am for diversification, processing, and manufacturing. I want to see new meat packing, Mr. Speaker; I want to see new pulp mills; I want to see new paper mills, and we're encouraging them; fertilizer plants, manufacturing and processing in food, Mr. Speaker — all of those things that the opposition member's against.

So let me point out, Mr. Speaker, with the diversification, processing, and manufacturing plan that we have, the Conference Board of Canada says that we can lead the nation with any reasonable co-operation from the weatherman in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier. I'm sorry to say to the Premier that it comes as no news to us or the people of the province of Saskatchewan that you're for Weyerhaeuser, and that you're for Pocklington, that you're for Intercontinental Packers, and that you're all for all the big business corporations. We know that, but we also know that that policy has resulted in 6,200 people leaving in February alone.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — That's what you've been doing for seven long years. You've been giving the money to your big business friends. You've been privatizing, you've bankrupted the province, and still 6,000 have left in February alone. Why don't you 'fess up that you and your Minister of Finance have failed the people of the province of Saskatchewan. You do not know where you're going, and this is a crisis which requires action. Admit that you failed in this regard.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I think that it's fair to say the hon. member must have been hurting as a result of the debate the last few days. He is the only leader we know in Canada whose law firm has a contract with a multinational bank to foreclose on people. Nobody else that I know of in this nation, no other leader in the past, nor their leader today will take on farmers and actually make money foreclosing on them, and his law firm is doing it. No wonder he's bringing it up, Mr. Speaker. High interest rates, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say to the hon. member that when we have difficult times because of drought and high interest rates, we shouldn't take

advantage of farmers, and we certainly shouldn't, Mr. Speaker, not stand in the way of protecting them. We should, Mr. Speaker, make sure that we provide them with interest rate relief, that we provide them with help, that we provide them with cash, Mr. Speaker, and all the programs we can design — all of that should be done.

And the hon. member knows and he says, well, because of an upgrader, because of Intercontinental Packers — maybe he's against them, too — because of a new paper mill, we lose jobs. It doesn't make any sense. It's not logical. We are employing new people. This new upgrader, the new one in Lloydminster, the new paper mill, the expansion in Intercontinental Packers, Flexi-Coil in Saskatoon, in his own city — those are new jobs. And he says, oh, it's nothing to do with drought; it's because you're creating new processing and manufacturing. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't follow. He's hurting because he has no agriculture policy. He's embarrassed by the fact that his law firm has taken them on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, new question to the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, this great defender of the farmers of Saskatchewan. How many foreclosures has ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan) under your leadership conducted is the question . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order. Order, order. We're having a little problem hearing the Leader of the Opposition ask the question, and I'd ask the co-operation of the members to allow him to ask the question in an environment where he can be heard.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan. I refer to him as the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, although I must confess that by his deeds and actions that's a tough title to attach sometimes. Mr. Premier, my question is this to you: according to Statistics Canada, in February of 1989 Saskatchewan's population is 1,007,000.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — October '88.

Mr. Romanow: — That, for all of the PCs applauding, was in October of 1988. That was in October of 1988. And as a result of your privatizations, as a result of your bankrupt farming policies, with 6,000 having left in the month of February, we are now below a million people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — We are below a million people. I say to the Premier of Saskatchewan that that's a condemnation of your records and your bankrupt policies. Can the Premier tell me is he so committed to privatization; is he so committed to giving his sweetheart deals to Weyerhaeuser that he's going to allow this thing to continue to run down, so that all the young men and women leave this province because they have no

opportunity? Is that your policy?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I will say to the hon. member, and we will agree to disagree with respect to his policies of the past of nationalizing and taking over, versus ours of replacing high interest rate and international debt with equity to encourage people to build and manufacture here. We are creating jobs as a result of that.

Mr. Speaker, I just say to the hon. member it can be difficult in rural communities, and I represent a rural riding, as a result of low oil prices or low agriculture prices or drought. We are trying to build and will build more irrigation and more water projects. The NDP is against that. We try to build diversification in energy; they're against that. We try to build paper mills; they're against that. We try to build increase in packing and processing and food manufacturing, and they're against that. They're against business or against trade.

We heard the other night they're against Americans; they're against International Pacific Rim, Mr. Speaker, and they're even against the farmers of Saskatchewan because the only leader we know, the only leader we know has a contract with a bank to foreclose on farmers. Well if that's their agriculture policy, I'll go into a by-election in rural Saskatchewan any day of the week, Mr. Speaker, because farmers want somebody that'll stick up for them, not take their farm.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The hon. members, of course, are in an enthusiastic mood. Perhaps part of it is that perhaps what we see is good questions and good answers. But I believe it's more debate than question period, and perhaps if the questions got a little shorter, and the answers got a little shorter, it would help.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have new question. And you will note, Mr. Speaker, I make these questions as specific as I can. The new question to the Premier is very simple. I'm against a lot of things that this government has done . . .

An Hon. Member: — Everything.

Mr. Romanow: — Well almost everything, you're right.

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. I don't like to intervene, but I'm going to ask the hon. members once more to please allow a situation where questions can be answered and answers can be given.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, my question is going to be specific to the Premier. In the light of this crisis of a million people less now in our population; in the light of his bankrupt policies; in the light of the fact that he is the biggest forecloser in the province of Saskatchewan — that man over there has pulled the trigger on more farmers than any premier in the history of the province of Saskatchewan — in the light of the fact that his privatization is taking us back to the Dirty Thirties, I'm

asking this question specifically of the Premier. In the light of this crisis, will you at least show the province that you've got something more by way of policy than a \$9 million birthday party in 1990. Cancel that and get a job creation program for the young people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is trying to say, well if we had the government involved in foreclosures, it's all right that his law firm forecloses. That's what the opposition members say. Well somebody over here foreclosed, therefore it's okay if the Leader of the Opposition . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Order, order. I don't think we're going to accomplish a great deal if hon. members spend half of question period hurling . . . Order! I wonder if hon. members, after being asked several times, would have the courtesy on both sides of the House to please refrain from talking constantly when the Speaker is on his feet, and I ask the courtesy of your attention.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I just say again to the Leader of the Opposition, it's not good enough for you to stand there and say, well there's been foreclosures in government programs, or law firms have been involved, and saying that you're okay then to do that. It's your firm that has a contract with a bank to do this ongoing. And here is the big socialist leader who says that he will protect you against multinationals, protect you against banks, and his firm, his firm, the firm of Mitchell, Ching, Romanow and others, forecloses on farmers . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. I must remind the Premier that the use of names in the chambers, according to our rules is . . . Order. Order. Order. We've been over this several times. We've been over this several times. As a matter of fact, we had a discussion of it last night, and it was agreed that the names of members will not be used and we'll all try to adhere to that.

Employment of Former MLAs and Others

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I took notice of a question from the member from Saskatoon Eastview with regard to one Jack Cennon and the question is: does Jack Cennon work for the Premier's office in Prince Albert and what is his salaries and what is his duties. I would like to inform the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Cennon is not employed at the Premier's office; in fact, is not employed by the government at all. Mr. Cennon's only connection with any . . . Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cennon's involvement with any government over his many . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cennon's only connection with any government activity in the past or today has been a member of the Saskatchewan Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission. Mr. Cennon has been actively involved in AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) for 25 to 30 years, Mr. Speaker. He has been active in that.

I simply say to the members opposite, when they stand up, make allegations in the House, the least they could do is check out the validity of that particular statement that they are making, Mr. Speaker, rather than to bring in to this House false statements about people. It comes out in the media, Mr. Speaker, and falsely accuses a citizen of this province. I think that is improper, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — All I can is, Mr. Speaker, I'll be darned. They missed one. They missed one. In about 60 defeated candidates, you missed one.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is: what on earth is wrong with Jack Cennon? He's the only candidate you missed. What is wrong with the man?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I hardly think that is the case, Mr. Speaker. But let me respond to the hon. member from Regina Centre. And I would refer, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member of Regina Centre who, in his previous life, worked as a political person within the previous NDP government, and so he's the guy that's criticizing this. But I go back, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's proper to read to the Assembly a resolution passed at the NDP convention, 1987, the resolution read as follows, and I think it's important to hear this, Mr. Speaker:

Whereas it is necessary to have civil servants and board members of provincial bodies who are dedicated to promoting the New Democratic program of democratic socialism, be it resolved that when the New Democratic Party is elected, a careful screening take place to ensure such people are in place (Mr. Speaker).

That is their resolution; that is their policy. How be it for them to criticize us, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister has the information with respect to all the others that he took notice of. The answer's going to be no because all the others we asked about, and of which you took notice, do work for the government.

Let's have the answer on Myles Morin, Myles Morin.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I also was asked a question with regard to Mr. Birkbeck. I can inform the Assembly that Mr. Birkbeck . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. Order, order. The question of the hon. member was not Mr. Birkbeck, it was Mr. Morin.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, the name was Myles Morin. Have you got the information?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I say to the hon. member, I say to the hon. member from Regina Centre, you were a defeated candidate in your previous life.

Following your defeat at the polls, you went to work . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. Order. The minister can answer the question if he can relate what he is saying to the question.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Certainly I can relate to thee what he's asking, Mr. Speaker. What I again would say to the House is this: the hon. member that posed that question stood as an NDP candidate in a provincial election, at which time he was defeated, Mr. Speaker — defeated, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, I believe it's spelled M-o-r-i-n. Have you got the answer for it?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, if I could continue with my answer. Following his defeat, I think it was in the 1964 campaign, Mr. Speaker, he went on to take a political position, a political position with the government of the day, which happened to be an NDP government — a political position, Mr. Speaker — something that he now criticizes some other person that stood for public office who now takes a particular job. He then says, that is wrong; that is naughty, naughty. But what did he do 10 and 15 years before?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — A new question, Mr. Speaker. By way of background, I might have asked about the Minister of Finance whose job I took when I went to work for the government. He went on to a distinguished career in politics; you went on to a distinguished career in politics; and so did I.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — I asked, Mr. Minister, about Myles Morin. And I say to you, Mr. Minister, you picked one name out of a very lengthy list and you say he doesn't work for the government. What about the rest you took notice for? What about Myles Morin?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, the reason I had the information today is because I was passed, before I came in here, a news release that was put out by Mr. Cennon, asking the Leader of the Opposition if he would please apologize for his members making a false accusation against him.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. The member from Regina Centre asked a specific question. I don't believe it dealt with Mr. Cennon.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was asking me how it was that I was so quick to have a response back on one, but not have to bring all the other information back. The other information, I'm still trying to get firmly put in place. The reason I'm answering on Mr. Cennon is because there was a press release. That press release, put out not by us but by Mr. Cennon, asked the Leader of the Opposition to apologize on behalf of his members for making a false accusation against . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. Order. That is not on the specific question. Order, order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 1 — An Act to establish the Public Participation Program

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to establish the Public Participation Program.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, with leave, could I revert to ministerial statements, please?

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Leave not granted.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I believe I had asked for leave, Mr. Speaker, to revert to ministerial statements.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. We're getting ahead of ourselves a bit. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly that the Bill be read a second time?

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

The Speaker: — The hon. member asked for leave just moments ago and leave was not granted by the House.

Bill No. 2 — An Act respecting Railways in Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting Railways in Saskatchewan.

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

Bill No. 3 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Railway Act

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Consequential Amendment to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Railway Act.

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

Bill No. 4 — An Act to amend The Residential Services Act

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Residential Services Act.

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

Bill No. 5 — An Act to amend The Line Fence Act

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Line Fence Act.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Wolfe.

Mr. Petersen: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last evening before we recessed at 10 o'clock, I was talking about a number of issues. Some of them were the strange double standards that the opposition party seems to hold towards the hiring practices of governments. Another was the fact that the member from Elphinstone admitted that the former premier, in all the years that he was the MLA for that constituency and premier of the province, did nothing for the people of that constituency, and they're still suffering today.

And thirdly, I was pointing out the fact that it's very, very passing strange that the member for Elphinstone would be standing up and defending his leader, the member for Riversdale, on the question of foreclosures on farmers, when only a week or 10 days ago, he was one of the people who were seeking to overthrow that leadership. And I think the play Julius Caesar, *et tu Brute*, is the line I used to describe it. And it's quite true, Mr. Speaker, those things are going on; those things are happening. And we saw today in question period the total lack of control that that leader has of the members of the opposition.

I also spoke last night, Mr. Speaker, of a number of firsts in the province of Saskatchewan, how Saskatchewan was a leader in a number of things. And I talked about a primary steel production, fine paper mill and . . . the only, the largest, pardon me, fine paper mill in western Canada; the first protein oil starch plant in western Canada; and so on and so forth.

And I travel down the list through Agribition, and oh, the potash situation, mines, the uranium production, and the heavy oil upgrader, much to the consternation of the members opposite who do not like to hear about positive things.

Last night they were rather vocal in their comments on my speech. Today I see they are very quiet and are sitting there attentively, and I hope they learn something.

I also went through a list of some people who had been hired by a previous administration who had political connections, and I find again the double standard of the opposition, once again displayed today, most interesting.

But getting back to firsts. We have another first in Saskatchewan. We have the first Progressive Conservative MLA for the constituency of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg in the history of our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Petersen: — Good member. Good member.

Now I think, Mr. Speaker, that sends a clear message to the opposition. During that by-election, they used every dirty trick in the book. They used everything there was. They even had the leader send out a letter. Now I don't know what good that did them, but they tried it. We really appreciate that by the way, Roy.

The interesting part about the fact that we have a PC MLA in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, Mr. Speaker, is that members of the opposition insist on saying that the Progressive Conservative Party is losing touch with rural Saskatchewan; losing touch with our base. Well I think not, Mr. Speaker. I think not.

I think members of the opposition are living in a dream world. I think they like to preach doom and gloom and are beginning to believe their own rhetoric. There's dissension in their ranks; there's consternation at not having a policy on agriculture. The best that they can do is stand up in this Assembly and try to attack everything that this Conservative government has done to try to help the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

When you talk about firsts that they like to attack, we have the first home-makers' pension plan in North America, Mr. Speaker, the first pension plan for people who do not have a formal pension plan in place for them by their employers — provincially run, provincially operated. We have over 40,000 people enrolled in that plan. And I'm waiting to hear members of the opposition stand up and say their usual lines of too little, too late, not enough, run improperly, we would have done it differently.

We've heard other speakers talk about how they would have done it differently had they been in power. They probably wouldn't have done anything because they're long on rhetoric and short on action. And we've seen that time after time after time. Time and again they stood up and said, we're the protectors of medicare; we're the protectors of the old; we are the protectors of the poor; we are the protectors of the people who are least able to look after themselves.

And, Mr. Speaker, that political party did nothing to back up their rhetoric. Moratoriums on nursing homes. That's what they did to help old people. That's their rhetoric, Mr. Speaker. I went into that last evening.

But we have another first in the province of Saskatchewan. We're the first government to get rid of extra billing — extra billing. Now for the party opposite to sit over there and sanctimoniously say that they are the defenders of medicare and the protectors of the poor and the disadvantaged is ludicrous to say the least, Mr. Speaker. Because they allowed extra billing all those years that they were in power, that they like to talk about as the good times. Let the good times roll, whoopee-ding!

Except, Mr. Speaker, they did nothing — they did nothing for people who had to pay extra bills on their medical care. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. They did nothing to provide nursing homes for people who needed it. They

did nothing, absolutely nothing to alleviate interest rates that were killing the people of the province of Saskatchewan in 1980 and '81.

In 1982 the Conservative government came in and we took interest rates on. We said we'd go to the wall for farmers, and we have.

Now, Mr. Speaker . . . pardon me, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker. I'm glad to see you in the chair, sir. Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, we have got a situation where once again they are trying to claim that they are going to do good for the people of the province of Saskatchewan; they are going to do wonderful things; they are going to do all sorts of wonderful things. And we ask them where their policy is and they say, oh it's coming, it's coming; yes, sir, we're going to have it; there's no two ways about it; government should own everything, run everything, and look after everybody from cradle to grave; and maybe they even want to go further. But, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, the members opposite know full well that their rhetoric is exactly that — only empty rhetoric, nothing more.

When you look at all of the firsts in the province of Saskatchewan that have happened under governments that sought to build, not nationalize . . . build, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, that's the important word.

And they go back and they talk about their roots in the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) party. Well the CCF party, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, is not the NDP Party, was never the NDP Party. And I'll tell you, the NDP Party sure doesn't hold a candle to the old CCF party. They built; they built things. They didn't take over from people who had worked hard to put something together and say, it's in the public good that we do this.

But oh, the NDP say, oh yes, we're going to nationalize everything. As a matter of fact, in response to a number of our programs that we put in place, public participation, they claim that should they ever come to power, God forbid, they will nationalize everything; they will expropriate everything for a dollar.

Now, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, if you are one of the people who have been working in one of the areas that have been opened up for public participation and you have a share or two or three or four in a company that's been opened up for you to participate in, doesn't that strike fear into your heart? It certainly does. They are going to come out and take your company that you now own as an employee-owner of that company and expropriate it from you for a dollar. And they're on record as saying it; they are on record as saying it.

We, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, have insisted on working towards better things, on building on our strengths, and while we have tough times in the province, while we have difficult economic times, we have done our best to alleviate the burden on people as best we can and still provide the services that they require and want.

But you can't just sit here and say, well we're going to provide these services. The government's got lots of money, right? Well that's not exactly true, because

government only has the money that they can bring in from the economy of their province in this case.

And we've sought to expand our markets and get new markets, different products, diversify and innovate. And every time that one of these projects is announced, the members of the opposition sit there and say, ah, it's no good; it's a dream; it's a pipe dream. They laugh and they chuckle and heap derision upon it. And we've see it time after time.

They are trying their level best to keep people from investing in the province of Saskatchewan, to keep investor confidence low. They are trying to undermine what this government is trying to do in regards to building the province, because they don't want to see people prosperous. They are the people of the poor and the downtrodden. They are the defenders of the poor and the downtrodden. If those people aren't poor, if those people aren't disadvantaged, if those people do have money to spend and do have opportunities, they won't represent them any more, and they won't have any votes.

(1445)

So they have a vested interest in keeping people poor and downtrodden. They have a vested interest, and it's exemplified by the fact that the member from Elphinstone yesterday stood in his place in the Assembly and admitted that nothing had been done in that constituency by the former premier of this province in all the years that he was there.

An Hon. Member: — Shame!

Mr. Petersen: — It is a shame. It really is a shame. Former premier Blakeney, a very good man, an astute statesman. Perhaps he should have looked at his own constituency first. Perhaps he should have looked at his own constituency and saw what he could do for those people that the member, the now member for Elphinstone say are downtrodden and disadvantaged.

What did they do? They did nothing. Are there nursing homes there? I don't know. Is there a liquor board store there? I think there probably was; I think there probably was. I think they had a liquor board store, if I'm not mistaken, over around McKnight Crescent. It was just wonderful; it was just wonderful.

And a member opposite, a member opposite, a good friend of mine, is pointing towards the press gallery and he's saying there's no one in the press gallery to hear my speech. But that's fine, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, because I'm speaking to the people of this province, the members of the opposition, and I'm trying to show members of the opposition the folly of their ways. They look at the press gallery, and that is who they play to every day. They play to the press gallery, and if there is no one there, why they just clam up and sit down and be quiet.

If you've ever noticed, members of the opposition, how many of you folks that aren't exactly in the front bank, the front row, ever get to speak during prime time. Think about it. How come there are members who are sitting at the back row there who never get to speak during prime

time?

I can tell you there's a leadership race going on in your group. There's a power struggle going on in your group. And you play to the gallery all the time to see how many headlines you get. And that's interesting because you forgot about people. You're playing to the gallery for your own purposes, for your own purposes.

And the member for Humboldt says he has it in the bag. I hope so; I hope so. I certainly hope so. The old adage about buying a pig in a poke is a lot like the member from Humboldt having it in the bag.

But let's talk about a few more firsts, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker. Saskatchewan pioneered electrical power to rural people, and it was done under a CCF administration, and I think it was a good thing. They brought power into the province of Saskatchewan; they brought in single phased power, the cheapest way of installing it that they could, and we had lights; we had our radios playing. It was something whose time had come and it was needed, and it provided much needed employment for the province at that time.

Well, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, when we came to office we saw other needs. We saw that people in rural Saskatchewan were saying, why can't I have cheap fuel to heat my home, to heat my businesses, to heat my shop? In some cases, chicken barns, hog barns, so on and so forth.

Members of the opposition said, oh no, you can't have natural gas. Oh no, you've got to pay for diesel fuel at four times the cost because we don't know how to build. We don't know how to provide that service to you, and we're going to keep you out there burning diesel fuel, which is not exactly as clean burning as natural gas, for time to come. We're just going to leave you out there.

Well, we thought that wasn't such a good idea, and we provided a rural gasification network at a cost that people could afford. And people all across this province said, I want to be in on it; I want to be first; I want to be in on it; I want to be part of it. And we see demand for that rising all the time. And thousands and thousands of miles of line have been laid — thousands of miles. And many farm families have achieved a cost-saving from that. And when you work in an agricultural situation on a farm, your input costs are very, very important to your bottom line, as they are in any business. And when we were paying four and five times what it costs for natural gas, it was hurting us — it was hurting us.

Back to electrification. It was nice to have the lights on and the radio playing. But we also have a problem of overhead lines. We said, you know, where it's possible we're going to get rid of some of those potential hazards with some overhead lines; we're going to bury those power lines for you. And we've started a program burying power lines where it's feasible to do so, putting them underground, again creating employment, again diversification, manufacturing, jobs for the people of Saskatchewan.

What did the opposition do when they were in power? Nothing — nothing. The NDP is bankrupt of new ideas.

The CCF at least did some thinking about it and built. The NDP never did, the NDP never did. They thought of nationalizing, taking over, borrowing money in New York to buy the potash mines. It made a lot of sense; we already had the holes in the ground; people were producing potash. Why don't we buy the potash mine? Sounds like a good idea. We'll pay 17 per cent. Great, great! That's the legacy that we inherited from the NDP — piles of potash. Piles of potash that we were paying 17 per cent on. It was disgusting.

And what bothers me most is they borrowed the money from the same people they bought the mines from. They could have charged them royalties, they could have put taxes against them, but oh, no, the NDP philosophy is state ownership, no matter what the cost, no matter how much it harms the people; state ownership, because they believe that only government can do things the right way.

Well, we saw 11 years of doing things the right way, and we saw what it did for this province. It was really amazing, really amazing. We ended up paying 24 per cent interest rates, 22 and 24 per cent interest rates. That was doing things the right way. And when they were questioned about their interest rates they said the equivalent of: let them eat cake. Their answer was, well do the best you can under tough times, boys and girls, because it's not a provincial matter. We don't get involved in interest rates.

That was the answer of the leader of that party who then became the leader of the opposition in 1982, the former premier Blakeney. He said, we don't get involved in that; we don't get involved in that. And so farmers like myself, small-business men like people all over Saskatchewan paid over 20 per cent interest, over 20 per cent interest. And you don't have to look very far, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, to see the hardship that that created, not just in 1980 and '81, but onwards.

Because you will find, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, that in many cases people, in an attempt to keep going, consolidated their loans, did their best to keep rolling and keep a cash flow up. But they had to consolidate loans. They had to consolidate and they had to borrow money just to pay their interest costs off. And today they're trying to pay those loans off with ever increasing interest rates again, ever increasing interest rates again.

Well, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, we've seen things in this province that are firsts for a number of years. And once again in Canada we pioneered the first mandatory mediation service which allows farmers and creditors to sit down with one another in a situation other than that of confrontation and litigation and foreclosure, that the Leader of the Opposition is so fond of doing, and work out their differences. And it may not work in every case. It may not. And I admit it will not work in every case.

But, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, it works in the majority of cases. It allows people that forum in which they can sit down across the table from one another and with some help from the mediator work out a plan of repayment or debt adjustment, or what have you. And the members of the opposition said, too little, too late, not enough, it isn't good enough. But it's working elsewhere in Canada and

elsewhere in North America.

The federal government instituted a farm debt review board based on our prototype, and it seems to be working. It's most interesting when you hear members of the opposition saying that they are the only ones in step; they are the only people who know how to do things; land bank's the answer. Yes sir, there you go, land bank's the answer. We'll just buy all the farm land and then everybody can work for the government and we'll be in great shape, won't we, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, which was why they went out of office in 1982, because their plans in 1982 were not acceptable to the people of the province.

In 1982, members of the opposition went around the province saying that farmers were in deep trouble if the Conservative government was going to be . . . (inaudible) . . . Well who put in 8 per cent interest for farmers when the interest rates were 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 per cent? Conservatives. Right? Conservatives. Conservatives did that. Did you ever hear of an NDP government doing that? No.

Who provided nine and three-quarter interest rates for home owners? Conservatives. Conservative government of the province of Saskatchewan. The NDP never did that. Who provided 6 per cent money for home owners to renovate their homes? A 6 per cent loan. Think about it. Who did it? Does anyone in the opposition benches know who put that program in place? Let me hear it from you; let me hear it from you. It was a Conservative government. And I see members of the opposition nodding in agreement.

Who was it, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, who put in 6 per cent money for farmers for a production loan? It was a Conservative government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And when times got tough, who was it who extended the repayment period from three years to ten years in response to farm groups asking for it? A Conservative government. A Conservative government.

Well, Mr. Deputy Deputy Speaker, we keep our word. We keep our word to farmers. We keep our word to business people. We're trying to build for the future. Yesterday my colleague from Morse constituency was speaking on building for the future, diversifying, looking for new markets, new ways to do things, enhancing that which we already have to make it better. The members of the opposition laughed, chuckled, snickered and said, get on with your speech; come on and get on with your speech, because they don't want to hear those things. They want to talk about land banks. They want to talk about things in generalities, of how the government will do things better.

Well it's one thing to talk about operating a farm or operating a business, but you've got to know that you have to open the door on Monday morning. You got to know that the cows need to be fed — I mean these details, these details. Anyone can sit behind a desk, read a book, and say, hey, it's easy to farm. Hey, it's easy to run a business. You have to know the details. You have to know what makes it operate in the long run, and it isn't just marketing wheat to the rest of the world. It just isn't

marketing wheat to the rest of the world. It is not that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We have a number of people, a number of people in this province who are trying to do things on their own for themselves, without government assistance, and those people are involved in a number of the projects the member from Morse talked about. The members opposite said it's not important, but it is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Every person, every idea in the province of Saskatchewan is important.

I just want to say that the Speech from the Throne that Her Honour delivered, speaks to every person in the province of Saskatchewan, and has something to offer for them. I will be supporting that motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say what a pleasure it is, and what an honour it is, to join this throne speech debate as a representative for the constituents of Regina North. I want to start by congratulating Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, for her part in delivering the throne speech, but I also like to take this first opportunity I have had to welcome the new member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. That member has the trust of the people, and I'm sure he understands what a great honour that is. But I just remind him, his constituents trust him to speak out on their behalf at every occasion, and I sincerely hope he is up to that trust.

Before the body of my speech, Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the member for Morse for trying to defend the throne speech, and he was speaking out as he sees it. I want to mention that I disagree with parts of his speech, and not to take too much time . . . I just want to mention just one portion of his speech that I think was not fairly represented.

The member was pleased with the program for deep wells and dug-outs. The problem, Mr. Speaker, is that that's where it stopped. The member did not go on to say that the deadline for applications for deep wells and dug-outs ends only 12 working days from today.

(1500)

He didn't explain that all of his constituency, the constituency of Morris, is again expected to have lower than normal run-off, and that according to the Saskatchewan Water Corporation planned map published in the March 14 *Leader-Post* showing very clearly the portion of Saskatchewan that is expecting less than normal run-off. So they've cut off a program that was helping some farmers with their much needed water for household and cattle use and they've cut it off — the application date — ending 12 short working days from now.

The reason I mention it, Mr. Speaker, is simply that it is symptomatic of what is going on with this government's "on again-off again" agricultural policy. Farmers need, and farmers want, and farmers deserve to have the predictability to know that when a program is introduced

today it's going to be in place for an extended period of time, certainly as long as it's needed. Not like this program that clearly runs out very shortly, despite the fact that according to the Saskatchewan Water Corporation there is going to be, or there appears that there will be, a high likelihood of yet another drought in particularly south-western Saskatchewan.

So farmers don't need a promise of a billion dollars that later turns into \$450 million some six months later. Family farmers need a full-time agricultural minister to protect them from farm closures, not one that protects the banks and goes about initiating farm foreclosures at the rate of three a day, as the present part-time Agriculture minister is doing.

Family farmers need a government that will maintain and improve revenue sharing so that it can reduce the property taxes, improve roads and highways, and to help to provide a rural infrastructure — a rural infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, that will allow the sons and daughters of not only farmers but of people residing in small towns and villages and hamlets of Saskatchewan, a rural infrastructure that will allow those people, those young people in particular, to have meaningful work job opportunities close to home so they don't have to flee the province of Saskatchewan, so they don't have to join the more than 6,200 people that left Saskatchewan in the very short month of February alone.

This government, Mr. Speaker, fails the test, fails it desperately. This government fails the test, and I want to turn to the Brian Mulroney government just briefly. It too failed the test. It was found to be corrupt and devoid and full of patronage, devoid of help, devoid of ideas. And the voters passed their judgement. Ten out of 14 Saskatchewan seats are held by New Democrats; only four are held by Tories. And that, Mr. Speaker, is going to happen again just as soon as the voters get an opportunity.

They are going to elect the member for Riversdale as the new premier. The member for Riversdale will be premier of a New Democratic government bringing a new tomorrow to the people of Saskatchewan, and we can't wait.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, it is going to be my honour later in the speech to move an amendment to the motion. I'm very pleased to have been asked to perform that task. I'm pleased as a back-bencher, if you like; I'm pleased as a member of Regina; and I'm pleased because this motion outlines and portrays the betrayal the Saskatchewan people in all walks of life are feeling about this government.

I want to deal now with a betrayal that the present government has perpetrated on the co-ops, on the credit union system. In 1985, Mr. Speaker, this government, the Conservative government, changed The Credit Union Act, and at that time they gave verbal assurances to the credit union system that the credit unions of Saskatchewan would be able to continue selling term insurance on loans and on deposits as they had been

doing since the early 1950s. A verbal assurance was given to the credit unions in 1985, and yet today we have the registrar of companies telling credit unions in no uncertain terms to cease and desist. What a betrayal of the co-operative system. What a betrayal of credit unions around this province.

What it shows, Mr. Speaker, is a government whose word is absolutely worthless — worthless. Credit union members, credit union board members, credit union staff all across this province understand what is being done. I have received letters from all corners of this province, including Regina, but also including places like Lashburn. I've received letters from the constituency of Arm River, from the constituency of Saltcoats, all dealing with this one betrayal — the betrayal of the credit union system. And yet the throne speech mentions nothing about making any changes, any amendments to The Credit Union Act, amendments that are obviously needed because the government opposite gave its word, and the word has proved to be absolutely worthless. And that's a real shame for credit union members all across this province.

The member for Kelvington-Wadena in his speech last night was very brashly attacking a former member of this legislature, the former member for Elphinstone, and said he didn't do anything for his constituents. I want to just touch on some of the things that Allan Blakeney did. I want to remind the House that the former member for Elphinstone was the minister of Health when medicare was introduced — a time of the utmost importance to the people of this province. It was a time when free and accessible, universal health care was being introduced, not just to the constituents of Elphinstone, but to the constituents all around this great province of ours.

At that time, where were the Conservatives and where were the Liberals? They were fighting it. They were standing out front of this legislature, and when they weren't trying to kick the doors down, they were organizing the KOD committee, the Keep Our Doctors committee, the "fight medicare" committee. And the member for Elphinstone, the former member for Elphinstone, stood up to that. He was a man equal to the time, and more than equal to the time, I might add. The legacy that Allan Blakeney has left is a legacy of medicare for all Saskatchewan people, including the constituents in Cut Knife-Lloydminster and the constituents in Regina North.

One of the other things that Allan Blakeney was part of was passing the most progressive health and safety labour legislation North America had seen at that time. The most forward-looking legislation — legislation that gave workers the right to know what dangers there were in their jobs; the right to know how to perform their given tasks safely. And the other part of what they were given in that legislation was the right to refuse, Mr. Speaker, the right to turn down unsafe employment, employment that was immediately injurious to their health or safety or the health and safety of a co-worker or anyone else. That right was given. At that time, where were the Conservatives? They were leading the charge saying oh, this is terrible legislation. We're going to have workers walking off the job *en masse*. Workers won't do a day's work any more

because now they've got the right to refuse. Well I defy anyone on the government side to point to one instance where someone has done that — has abused the right-to-refuse legislation. Not one instance in many, many years.

The other part of that health and safety and forward-looking legislation, Mr. Speaker, was the legislation was enforced, something that was sadly lacking in this government's term of office. Today we see health standards that are written, look good, sound good, but absolutely nothing being done to enforce it. Workers throughout this province are just left to their own devices. They know now that if they exercise any of the legislative rights that this Assembly has passed for them, it won't get any support, it won't get any backing, and they're literally standing on their own. We have an anti-worker government, we have an anti-union government, we have an anti-people government, and that's the legacy this government is leaving.

We're going to change it. The member for Elphinstone is going to be the Premier after the next election. We are going to form the government, and we are going to help show the people — not just the working men and women of Saskatchewan — we're going to show the people of Saskatchewan how proud we can be of our province, how proud we can all be of our Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — The member for Riversdale, not Elphinstone.

Mr. Trew: — My colleague points out that it's the member for Riversdale, not Elphinstone, who will be the next premier. I make that correction, and so noted. Thank you, colleague.

There's one other area that the former member for Elphinstone who was being attacked last night, Allan Blakeney, was a part of that I just want to touch on.

In 1971, when the NDP took office, the minimum wage in this province was a dollar an hour — 90 cents in rural Saskatchewan, dollar in the cities. But a two-tier minimum wage in 1971, the maximum was a dollar; the maximum minimum wage was a dollar for urban people. By 1982 that minimum wage had steadily progressed to the point that it was \$4.25 an hour, the highest minimum wage in all of Canada. The working men and women of Regina Elphinstone certainly appreciated it, and they showed their gratitude by re-electing and re-electing Allan Blakeney. The members, the working men and women of Saskatchewan, appreciated that ever-growing minimum wage.

And what have we seen, what have we seen since 1982? Here it is 1989, seven years later — seven years later, and those Scrooges over there have only given 25-cent increase, one two-bit increase to people on minimum wage in seven years, seven sorry years for the working men and women of this province. That's why members on this side of the House are opposed to anything this government is claiming to do and claiming to be helping people. Actions speak far louder than words. Two bits an hour over seven years is just nothing short of an insult.

Mr. Speaker, government member after government member stood up in debate, and have they defended their throne speech? No, they haven't. Instead, what we have witnessed here in this legislature is government member after government member attacking the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Riversdale, using untruths, using innuendo and their own rumours. If there isn't a good rumour going by 2 o'clock, they do their darnedest to start one — matters not about truth, matters not a bit.

In their vain attempts to blight the Leader of the Opposition's good name, they're really making a mockery out of this whole Legislative Assembly, and they're making fools out of themselves. And why are they doing it, Mr. Speaker? They know why. They're doing it because the member for Riversdale is the only game in town. They know, one of them has even admitted in his speech, the member who will be premier, he said in his speech in the last couple of days, the member who will be leader. And it's a desperate attempt by a desperate government, a desperate attempt, Mr. Speaker, to discredit our leader, the man who indeed will be premier, as they so aptly stated.

The throne speech, Mr. Speaker, is disappointing for a number of reasons. It's disappointing for its silence regarding urban affairs, regarding urban revenue sharing, particularly as it relates to capital funding. Capital funding for urban municipalities has been eliminated, gone completely under this government, under this Conservative government — \$18 million lost in one program alone, \$18 million. It's kind of . . . I don't know whether it's coincidental, the hand-out to one man, Peter Pocklington, was 20 million. I guess all they had to do was pony up an extra \$2 million; take \$18 million from people who reside in cities, take \$18 million out of their pockets and give it to one man, Peter Pocklington.

(1515)

Small wonder, small wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the people are fed up. Small wonder they're already asking me: when is the next election? I tell them when the next legislation has to be and they say, oh no, do we have to wait that long? And there's genuine disappointment.

I want to just bring one person . . . I want to name just one person who is joining the exodus of Saskatchewan people. A former civil servant, a gentleman who had toiled 25 years on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, toiled 25 years at progressively better and better or more difficult jobs — in other words, he wasn't stagnant, he was progressing through his career — that man, John, this very day, this very day is on the road to Alberta. He has gone. He is joining the exodus.

Now I hadn't met John until just yesterday. I didn't seek him out, he came to see me. He came to me with a couple of problems, a couple of concerns. But the sad part of John's story, Mr. Speaker, is that John was 53 years old when this government gave him the boot — gave him the boot after 25 years, gave him the boot. What John is forced to do . . . his government pension, as you can understand, at 53 years is reduced. He's still a fairly young man, still fairly young, middle-aged man, needs employment. His pension cheque is something a little

more than what he would receive if he were on social services, so he doesn't qualify for any help there. But at 53 years old it is difficult to find an employer.

In this day and age when employers can pick from thousands and thousands of unemployed people, when employers can name the price they are going to pay, and employees or prospective employees can either take that \$5 an hour or they can leave it, that's the prospect that John was faced with. As a result, John has left for Alberta this very day. He's left for Alberta; some of his family remains here.

But the good news — there is some good news in that. As he was leaving my office, John indicated to me his desire. He says, I am hoping that the election, when it is called in Saskatchewan, comes at a time when I'm not busy at my new-found job in Alberta, because if I can, I am going to come back and I am going to help you elect a New Democratic government. John is going to come back and canvass door to door telling people about what members opposite have done and reminding people we need the member for Riversdale to be the premier; we need a New Democratic government that will care for working men and women.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — I was talking a little bit earlier about revenue sharing to urban municipalities, using just one program to illustrate, Mr. Speaker, how the province of Saskatchewan has reduced its revenue sharing to urban municipalities.

But what does that really mean for my constituents? What does it mean for men and women living in Saskatchewan, living in urban Saskatchewan in particular, as it relates to the urban capital expenditure program?

What it means is that the burden of taxation is shifting from the provincial government, which used to do some extra revenue sharing over what it does now — the burden of taxation is shifting onto property owners. And it's not just exclusive to property owners, Mr. Speaker. Renters also pay those taxes through their landlord. It's included in their rent. We would expect it to be no other way. That's the only way a landlord can recoup his extra costs, is increasing the rent. So we have renters and property owners paying increased taxes because of this callous provincial government decision to cut off the cities, to reduce the revenue sharing.

So our taxes are going up. Our property taxes are going up.

The alternative to that is we sit, and we could sit and watch our streets decay. Many people in Regina, in particular, will tell you our streets are already decaying, and we certainly can't afford to stop them from patching them up. So we really need an injection of cash from the province. I'm hoping that the Minister of Finance will get that message and will include a cash injection for the urban municipalities when he introduces his budget in the coming weeks.

Education funding has fallen by whatever measure you

choose to use. Education funding has fallen. As a percentage of provincial spending, education funding has fallen from 16 per cent in 1975; that is, 16 per cent of all provincial moneys spent were on education. By 1980, that had slipped to 15 per cent. From 16 per cent to 15 per cent of a growing pie. But by 1988 we see the amount of money spent on education slipping much, much faster; it's now about 10 per cent of the provincial expenditures. Ten per cent in 1988, down from 16 per cent in 1975.

We see the University of Regina, which is projecting this year to have an accumulated debt load of \$7 million. The U of R, which, Mr. Speaker, your government promised in 1986, leading up to the election, promised a new students' union building — just one small example — promised it in the heat of the election, a brand-new students' union building we could all be proud of.

Well what are they doing? Right after the election was safely out of the way — no! The Finance minister says, whoops, it's not \$389 million, our deficit; it's now \$1.2 billion for this year alone. Whoops, he says, we've got to cut, we got to hack, we got to slash.

Isn't it amazing what changes can take place in 28 short days.

At the start of the election we were assured in our first term of office, we were assured by the Conservative government that in their first term of office they had undone all the dastardly deeds those socialists had done, had created — solved all those problems. Now we were on the smooth sailing, they said then.

Well the smooth sailing is awfully choppy. The smooth sailing has cost the students at the University of Regina a students' union building. The University of Regina has a \$7 million debt. Funding for education is at a crisis level all across the province, and very little mention of that in the throne speech.

Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech there was mention of a tax on environmentally unsafe products. I just want to share with you that my constituents, a good number of them, are concerned that styrofoam cups may indeed be causing problems for the ozone layer, may be depleting the ozone layer, and my constituents, those who have that concern, and I, would like to see alternate cups available, if you like, non-styrofoam cups. Perhaps they'd be paper.

That is a concern, and I welcome what brief mention was made of the environment in the throne speech. But what's of a much greater concern is the environment in the Uplands area of my constituency, the Uplands area that borders adjacent to the NewGrade upgrader. We were told, before the upgrader was being built, that sulphur dioxide, hydrogen sulphide emissions would be drastically reduced after the upgrader came on stream. That's what we were told.

I raised the matter as early as in my maiden speech. I also raised the matter in environmental estimates, which you will recall, Mr. Speaker, in the very first year environmental estimates took a considerable length of this Assembly's time.

I raised the matter with the Minister of Environment and was told, yes, it's a serious problem you're raising; yes, people's lives could be in jeopardy if there ever is an accident, but not to worry, we're doing everything we humanly can to see that that upgrader is safe, to see there is no leak of hydrogen sulphide, but what's happened? February 28 this year, February 28 we had a leak of the deadly gas, hydrogen sulphide, leaked from the NewGrade upgrader, not reported for some two hours, despite the fact this is potentially a deadly gas; only reported after inquiries were made — gee, what's going on at the upgrader?

Well, we had words in the throne speech, we heard words about tough, new environmental legislation, and I was encouraged by it. But the sad news is just days after this spill we see the Minister of the Environment backing away and saying, well, gee, maybe we don't need a thorough investigation into this situation at the upgrader. Maybe, well maybe they will have learned and will not have another accidental spill.

I wonder if the people in Bhopal, India, were told the same thing, Mr. Speaker. I wonder, and it scares me. It scares me; it terrifies me to think that we have all of that potential right next to a residential area, and the government does nothing about it; the government makes jokes about it. It is just too serious to ignore that issue.

As a positive suggestion, we New Democrats have called for an investigation to determine what has happened at that upgrader in the past. We called for that investigation in a positive manner so they could find out what's happened there in the past; take steps to see that any chance of an accident was removed . . .

An Hon. Member: — You're against the upgrader.

Mr. Trew: — The member for Cut Knife tells me that I'm against the upgrader. I'm on record four or five times in this legislature speaking in favour of the upgrader. I'm not saying I'm against the upgrader; I'm saying I'm against killing people. That's what I'm against.

Mr. Speaker, we need this investigation. We need it to assure the people of Uplands and the people of Regina, because we never know what direction the wind is going to come from. We need to know that a repeat of the hydrogen sulphide accident of February 28, this year, will not happen. We also need to know that a worse accident cannot happen.

The people of Saskatchewan, the people of my constituency, certainly are telling me, Mr. Speaker: we need a government that's committed to the environment, a government that's willing to stand up for the people, not a weak-kneed environmental minister that will not stand up to this NewGrade upgrader. We need, we need some action on this.

I want to turn now, Mr. Speaker, to the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. There are some areas of concern there. As you may or may not know, Saskatchewan Transportation Company is the bus

company owned by the people of Saskatchewan. But I want to tell you some of the things that have happened to this bus company under the Conservative administration.

In 1982 there were 81 bus coaches whose average age was 4.8 years — 81 buses, less than five years old on average. In 1987 they were not at 81 buses but down to 62. The sell-off was taking place. Down to 62 buses and the average age of the fleet was 10.1 years — that in 1987.

There's been no trade since then. Today, Mr. Speaker, the average age of buses, of the Saskatchewan transportation buses, is eleven and a half years old — eleven and a half years old. Buses in the industry . . .

(1530)

An Hon. Member: — That's not old for a bus.

Mr. Trew: — Member of the government says, that's not old for a bus. The industry average is just over seven years. But I guess if you say eleven and a half years age on average isn't old, that that maybe is why you've allowed that bus company to go downhill to the point that it is today.

The oldest buses, Mr. Speaker, are of course the most expensive to repair. The oldest buses, we have been told in Crown Corporations Committee, cost 30 cents a mile to maintain and to run. New buses, we're told, are running about 12.4 cents. That information comes from the members opposite.

The members are saying you have to have money to buy a bus, and of course you do. But when you ignore the rejuvenation of a fleet, when you ignore the rejuvenation of your farm equipment, that's the first step to you not continuing in business. If you ignore your farm equipment and don't replace it on a fairly regular basis, you're going out the back end. The same thing happens with the bus company.

This bus company that the government members have driven into the ground, starting in 1982 with a \$936,000 accumulated surplus, a virtually brand-new fleet of 82 buses — now we see a corporation that has total debt of \$14 million, over \$14 million debt; a fleet that has shrunk to 62 buses; a fleet that is very aged by any standards; a fleet that I defy any government member to find an older fleet of buses owned by any bus company in North America. I think you can't do it.

So why has STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) lost so much money under the Conservatives, Mr. Speaker? Is it the unions? Is it the union's staff and the drivers? Is it because they're being paid too much? My colleague from Regina North West says no.

And I wanted to just look briefly at it. The number of coach operators is down, lower than it was in 1982; the maintenance staff, there's fewer maintenance staff employed today than there was in 1982; the terminal staff is down from 1982; but lo and behold, administration and management is up. Management, including the hacks brought in by this government from Ontario to turn our bus company around is what we were told at the time,

well they've sure turned it around from nearly a \$1 million accumulated surplus to a \$14.25 million debt.

And I want to just make mention of the collective agreement, Mr. Speaker, because there has not been a collective agreement at Saskatchewan Transportation Company since June of 1986 — June 1986. Very soon it's going to be three years. The workers at Sask Transportation Company will have been without a union contract three whole years. Small wonder, Mr. Speaker, that those employees at STC applied for and got removed from provincial labour legislation and got put into federal labour legislation at their request.

I want to turn briefly to SaskTel, Mr. Speaker. SaskTel has embarked on a privatization scheme that is just hemorrhaging money from SaskTel. Computer services of SaskTel and Saskatchewan computers, SaskCOMP, were put together to form WESTBRIDGE. SaskTel loses the new company under the new scheme and the private WESTBRIDGE gains. SaskTel now has to pay for all those computer services. And who does it pay? WESTBRIDGE. And WESTBRIDGE builds into it its profit motive.

SaskTel now pays for those services. SaskTel's income base shrinks. Who pays? The consumers who rent their monthly phones are going to be paying through increased charges. SaskTel also sold its cable TV network. Again, again, Mr. Speaker, the revenue base for SaskTel shrinks. Who pays? The monthly subscribers of SaskTel.

Then we see the directory services privatized. That's the latest move; directory services that have made SaskTel literally millions of dollars — millions of dollars. And where will that profit go under the new privatized directory services? Only 10 per cent of that profit is now going to go to SaskTel, because that's the equity that SaskTel maintains in that new directory services — 10 per cent.

So again, Mr. Speaker, SaskTel's income base shrinks. Again it shrinks. Again the consumers are going to be hit with bigger monthly telephone bills — bigger monthly bills. Just as sure as I'm standing here addressing this Assembly, our telephone bills are going to go up. Individual customers are going to pay for the privatization, the privatization that's going on from government members opposite.

Probably later this year, later this year, Mr. Speaker, we're probably going to see the opening announcements about deregulation of long distance telephone service. It's going to be deregulated by the Mulroney government, the friends of the Conservative government opposite me here. The Mulroney government is going to open up the deregulation of long distance telephones, and what's going to happen? Who's going to speak up? Who's going to stand up against that? Do you think the minister responsible for telephones has any credibility opposing privatization, opposing deregulation?

But mark my words, the member responsible for SaskTel is going to get on his high horse, after it's too late to do anything about it, and he's going to say, oh gee, we're opposed to privatization, we're opposed to deregulation. After the horse is at the far end of the pasture, long gone

from the barn, he's going to shut the barn door. No credibility there at all. And who's going to pay? SaskTel subscribers are going to be left footing the bill.

Members opposite were suggesting that I refer to agriculture for a little while, and indeed it is my intention, Mr. Speaker, to do so, to address that very important issue in Saskatchewan. We need — I've mentioned it earlier in this speech — we need not just a part-time Minister of Agriculture, we need a full-time Minister of Agriculture. And we need a Minister of Agriculture that will stand up to Brian Mulroney and make him deliver on his pre-election promise — the election of just last fall, the election promise of hundreds of millions of dollars for farmers in Saskatchewan that is now being chipped away at, being reduced, reduced, reduced; payments that farmers were told they were going to get last fall and they're still waiting. They're not even being told the cheques are in the mail yet. Why not? Because the cheques aren't in the mail.

The farmers of Saskatchewan want some help. They want it, and they want it when they need it. There are three farmers a day leaving the farms, leaving the farms because that Minister of Agriculture, the Premier, is not standing up to the banks, not standing up to the federal government, is helping out the banks, and is initiating farm foreclosures, foreclosures on Saskatchewan family farms. He's initiating it. That government is the one totally devoid of agricultural policies, and that's the reality.

Farmers now see what's going on. They now know. You ask any farmer who's been farming for 15 years: when was it that you made money? When was it? Was it under the Tories or was it under the NDP? Ask any farmer. They'll tell you. Ask any business man. Ask business men and business women across this province: when was it you were making money? Is it under the Tories or was it when the NDP was in power? Any small business. I see there's now some silence because the government members recognize it.

Bankruptcies this past year escalated to the highest rate. Bankruptcies in Saskatchewan were at the highest rate they had been since 1971, the last of the Thatcher, Liberal Thatcher days — highest rate of bankruptcy. What an Achilles heel — 1,236 bankruptcies in Saskatchewan last year.

You know, when I stood up and addressed the New Democratic Party in, what was it, February 20, 1985 — that was the night I was nominated — I used the provincial bankruptcy figures in my address to the members of Regina North. I explained how they had just mushroomed all out of proportion. But this latest figure just makes those 1985 figures look like nothing — three a day.

So what have we got, Mr. Speaker. We've got a government that is allowing farmers to leave the farm — three a day — foreclosing on farmers. We have a government that cuts off programs that are going to help farmers. It's on again, off again. Promise a billion, deliver something eight months later, something much less than a billion. On again, off again. Not one farmer in this province can take a government program or the

government agricultural policy to the lending institution and say, here's what's going to happen this year; here's the bottom line. They can't do it.

Mr. Speaker, it is really interesting to see the lack of attention that farmers are getting by this government — and I see the government members are a little bit touchy about it; the lack of attention that agriculture gets; the part-time Minister of Agriculture, who has been taking a beating in question period, who has been taking a beating in this legislative session, and what do we have on the other hand?

On the other hand we have Peter Pocklington getting a gift of \$20 million. We have Weyerhaeuser of Tacoma, Washington, getting a quarter of a billion dollars. We see highways equipment valued at over \$40 million given away for \$6 million. We see more than 500 highway employees gone. We see a highway system deteriorating. We see a billion dollar boondoggle in the Premier's riding — a billion dollar shafferty program — a billion dollars spent in the Premier's riding for a program that may be illegal, but certainly is not universally accepted, not universally accepted. And that billion dollars cannot be spent on hospitals; it cannot be spent on education; it cannot be spent on the children's dental plan; it can't be spent on highways; it can't be spent on revenue sharing to urban and rural municipalities. So we see, we see in this legislature, we see all kinds of give-aways, all kinds of patronage, all kinds of help for friends of the Tories, and we see farmers in trouble.

(1545)

But what does it do, Mr. Speaker, for Irene, my constituent Irene — Irene who I brought up to the Minister of Health. I brought up the problems Irene was having, and the Minister of Health passed it on to the minister responsible for Social Services. But the facts of the matter were Irene was 59 years of age; Irene had a total monthly income of some \$490 a month. That was a Canada disability income. She had prescription drug bills that amounted to over \$350 a month, and not one lick of help, not one bit of encouragement came from members opposite.

The Minister of Health said, sorry, not my department. And the Minister of Social Services responded that, well gee, sorry, there's nothing we can do. Irene makes \$8 a month too much, so nothing we can do — for \$8 a month.

So what's this government done for Irene? It's forced Irene to make a choice every day between her much needed medication and between food. That's the choice that's going on every day. Government members opposite may choose to blame Irene for the fact that she has diabetes, or heart condition, or high blood pressure, or arthritis. I fail to understand how any of those things can be directly Irene's responsibility. Certainly there are things that Irene could do, and I'm sure does, to look after her health.

But this government puts the blame on the sick and the innocent; that's what this government does.

And what does this government do for Bob, another constituent of mine — Bob, who phoned me up less than a week ago? Bob was telling me that when Allan Blakeney

was the premier, he had a job in the construction field and he was making over \$16 an hour. He was raising his family and providing them the educational opportunities they needed.

His family had moved here from Ontario in the mid-1970s and he liked Saskatchewan. He liked Saskatchewan because people were treated equally here. Everyone had access to hospital care; everyone had access to educational services. There was no such thing as second-class citizens, as far as he knew, in Saskatchewan.

But what's happened now? Bob's health has deteriorated. The jobs dried up, and about that time his health started to deteriorate, so Bob no longer has employment. Bob now is living on a very, very meagre pension, and Bob no longer works in the construction industry. So we've got the situation where Manalta coal of Calgary got the mine, and Bob got the shaft.

Bob was asking me . . . he said: will things get better? Will things get better in Saskatchewan, or should I just pack up and leave right now? Should I just give up on it?

Well I talked to Bob at some length. I talked to Bob about what was going on in Saskatchewan. We talked about when Tommy Douglas formed the government in 1944, and how, at that time, the province was essentially broke. Civil servants didn't know from one pay cheque to the next whether they dared take their cheque to the bank to get it cashed. They'd go to the bank manager and the bank manager would say yes, or no; I can cash it, or I can't. If he said no, they'd take the cheque home and come back in a couple of days and hope that the answer was different.

Three years later the CCF introduced hospitalization — not full bore medicare as we know it today, but the hospital was paid for. The individuals were still responsible for paying for the doctor, but at least the hospital charges were all covered at that time. And it wasn't . . . it was 16, 17 years after that when medicare, as we understand it today, was introduced by the CCF in Saskatchewan, funded 100 per cent by the province of Saskatchewan, by the people, the businesses, all of the taxes of Saskatchewan, funded medicare 100 per cent. It was some time after that, the federal government got involved and started sharing the cost of medicare, and indeed they introduced medicare right across Canada.

I also talked then, Mr. Speaker, to Bob further about the Blakeney years, and those he knew first hand, so I didn't have to spend a great deal of time talking to him about the health and safety legislation that he had enjoyed working under. I didn't have to tell him about the full employment there was under the Blakeney New Democrats. I didn't have to tell Bob any of those things. Bob knew it. Bob lived through it. Bob appreciated what was going on. That's why he moved, he and his family, to Saskatchewan from Ontario.

And I assured Bob that once we get the next election called we're going to have a new premier; we're going to have a new government; we're going to see some fairness and some dignity return to the people of Saskatchewan; we're going to see the member for Riversdale as the

premier, and we're going to have a New Democratic government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — I was talking a little bit about labour legislation, Mr. Speaker, and that leads me into . . . I was listening to a radio talk show the other day. The Minister of Labour was one of two guests, and he was talking about his new legislation. The other guest was Barb Byers.

And I notice, from the reaction of the government members opposite, they are just as touchy as the Minister of Labour was in that radio interview and in that call-in show. Caller after caller after caller was abused by the Minister of Labour and told they were nothing but NDP hacks. The working men and women of this province understand labour legislation well enough to know who it is they trust. They know they don't trust the member for Melville. They know, from past history, just what it is he will do when it comes to working men and women.

You know, many of us, Mr. Speaker, remember James Dean as being a young actor who was really best known for his acting as a somewhat disturbed young man in the show *Rebel Without a Cause*. The Minister of Labour has shown us that he's a cross between the actor James Dean and the Premier. He's a "rebel without a clue." Bad employers under this legislation get more approval to attack the workers, the working men and women and their rights in this province. Under this proposed legislation, the workers are being attacked and they know it. They're being abandoned and attacked, Mr. Speaker, by this labour legislation. They know it; they don't like it. They're going to fight this legislation all the way, and I'm glad for it.

Mr. Speaker, there are many more concerns that I would like to address in this throne speech debate, but I will be taking my place shortly, after I move an amendment. That is to allow other MLAs to take their place and join in this debate. But I'm going to be taking my place after moving the amendment knowing, in the firm knowledge, that there is a new tomorrow coming. There is a new government-in-waiting. There is a new premier elect — that man, the member for Riversdale.

And we are very much looking forward to the next election on this side of the House. We're not looking forward to the next election nearly as much as the people across this province are. They want an election, we welcome it any time you screw up the courage to call it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the following words be added to the motion:

This will be seconded by my colleague, the member from Moose Jaw South.

but regrets that the provincial government has failed to provide business and job opportunities and security for Saskatchewan people, has failed to protect and improve critical public services like health care and education, has mismanaged the province's finances, has betrayed Saskatchewan's

farm families, has failed and misplaced its priorities by putting privatization for the few ahead of the public interest for all, resulting in the out-migration of thousands of Saskatchewan families.

I so move.

The Deputy Speaker: — I would ask the member for Regina North to find another seconder. The member from Moose Jaw South has already spoken.

Mr. Trew: — The member for Prince Albert. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Debate continues on the main motion and the amendment concurrently.

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd just like to mention right off the bat that I will not be supporting the said amendment, but that I do support the main motion.

I'd like to start off, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by saying how much I enjoyed the presentation made by Her Honour a week ago today. I know that all members would join with me in knowing that she did a magnificent job for her first throne speech, and that I'm sure that Her Honour, as she has indicated in her previous public and private life, will only get better and better as she grows with the job. Her Honour has exhibited a driving ability to excel at whatever she has undertaken in her life. And I just know that it was a very wise decision to have her as the Queen's representative in our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — I'd also like this opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to officially welcome our new member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. And I know that the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg had some butterflies and a little bit of apprehension as he got up to make his first speech in this House, because I went through those same feelings some four years ago this March, or rather April — I guess it would be April 12, 1985, because I too came in in a mid-term by-election. I too was in a race which was hard fought, another rural riding which the members of the NDP Party had great hopes for.

And it's kind of ironic, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I heard some of the same rhetoric, the same scare tactics used on the constituents of Thunder Creek as the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg had used in his constituency.

And I really have to commend him because, unlike myself — and I thought I had done a passable job in my first speech — the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg grabbed the attention of the members opposite. And it was nice to see that the member from Riversdale actually had to come in and give our new lad a bit of a tongue lashing. And so I just congratulate him. If he keeps up that type of progress, he's really going to rile the members opposite many times over in the next couple of years.

(1600)

And I'd also like to welcome him to what I consider to be sort of a unique club, and that's the back bench on the government side. Because this back bench on this side, irregardless of what you might hear from across the way, are achievers. They're achievers for their ridings, and they're particularly achievers for rural Saskatchewan.

Some people like to degradate the people over here by calling us the Hallelujah Chorus. Well I say, member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, that it's one of the best choruses in Canada, because we sing the message of development and diversification for our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — And no matter what the members opposite say, we'll continue to sing that song as a group of achievers, of individuals who are respected in their ridings, and who are delivering the message that the people that elected them wanted them to bring to this House.

And in contrast I look at the hypocrisy that comes from the members opposite. Over the years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've had a passing interest in politics in this province, you might say. It's a bit of a family tradition, and it's something that we enjoy talking about around the kitchen table. And I remember well, visiting this House on many occasions through the late 1960s and 1970s and, indeed, up to the time that I was elected to this legislature.

I remember sitting up there, as the gentleman is today, and watching the debate in this House. I remember the potash debate after the 1975 election, the decision to get into uranium mining, many of the controversial subjects which arose when the members opposite were government.

And I remember well who led the chorus on this side of the House at that time. And I must say that I miss the member from Elphinstone, or the former member from Elphinstone, the former premier, Mr. Blakeney. Because at least, when that member was in this legislature as part of that government, there were original thoughts arising from the government benches. Those thoughts may have been misguided in the opinions of some in this province, but they were original thoughts.

But beside that member at that time sat an individual who is now once again a member of this House, a member from Riversdale, who is probably best remembered on the public stage of Canada for the little dog and pony show — called the Uke and toque show, or something like that; I don't know. It had something to do with our constitution. And he preened and strutted on that public stage and was the cheer-leader for the then premier.

And I guess the thing that it reminded me most, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I sat in the gallery and watched these events was of a popular comedy act that was around some time, I think, before I was born. But it was Mr. Edgar Bergen — I've seen the reruns — and Charlie McCarthy. And I don't think I need to tell you who was Edgar and who was Charlie in the arrangement that was in the

House here in the 1970s.

It's the kind of hypocrisy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that even surfaces in the NDP newspaper, the *Commonwealth*. And I think that this article was written by the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, I believe, in the *Commonwealth*, January, 1989 edition. And I think this sums up the problems that the members opposite have and definitely their leader has, and I quote. It says:

In spite of our relative electoral success in the October 1986 provincial election, Saskatchewan New Democrats are still searching for a bullet-proof vest every time they advance public policy or comment.

And I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's what you get from a cheer-leader and someone who never had an original thought.

Surprisingly enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's in a bit of a contrast to some revelations which have come to light about the member for Regina North East lately.

I'd like to read a quotation from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* of March 2, 1989. And these things have been dealt with before in the last few days, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I think it's important that we do put it in context. When you just think about who possibly could be saying these words and what group you might imagine that would be bringing forth these thoughts — and I quote. It says:

Fortunately, not being hidebound by philosophy, the men at the table hit on what was then a rather novel scheme. (And in quotation marks it says) Let's allow individuals and private corporations to buy up to 50 per cent of the (province's) Crown (corporations.) They even thought up a nifty name for the new holding company, Saskatchewan Holdings and Re-Investment Inc. Neatly shortened to SHAR . . .

And it indicated that people were going to share in the ownership of the Crowns.

Now I imagine all kinds of people with those thoughts. People sitting around the table, I suppose, at the Assiniboia Club or, Heaven forbid, people in a Tory meeting; people that have an interest in business in this province; people that would like to see their province grow and prosper. Those are the kind of people I imagine that might think these things.

And it goes on later though in the article to identify the people that were thinking these thoughts. And I quote again, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These were:

. . .the minutes of the Saskatchewan Crown Investment Corporation directors meeting for January 14, 1982."

The cabinet ministers stamping their seal of approval on privatization were the elite of the then premier Allan Blakeney's NDP government. The current member for Regina North East, who was Finance minister; one Urban

Affairs minister, Walter Smishek; one Environment minister, Ted Bowerman, who I think the Deputy Speaker is fairly familiar with; one minister of co-operation and co-operatives, Don Cody; and ex-Highway's minister Eiling Kramer. And this group of gentlemen actually gave their nod of approval to this idea that I brought forward a few minutes ago.

And I guess I underestimated the member from Regina North East. I didn't know that he had that kind of foresight, and I'm glad that he does. I await the day that he will stand on his hind legs in this legislature and come clean with his thoughts and support a notion which obviously had a great deal of thought and attention and bookwork and everything else done to it, in order to put his stamp of approval on such an idea.

And I guess if he doesn't do that, then as we go down further in the particular article we would have to apply this particular sentence. It says:

In office, NDPers secretly plan to launch a massive privatization program; out of office, they savage their own ideas.

So I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's up to the member for Regina North East to tell us whether he believed in what he was doing or if he is willing to savage his own ideas. Once again I say, how much hypocrisy can we stand?

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the throne speech which was presented by Her Honour, I think did have some vision. It did have a blueprint for the 1990s. Irregardless of what the members opposite say, the throne speech, which I am sure all of you have read, and it goes on to a number of pages here in *Hansard*, goes through a number of topics and titles — did clearly identify sectors of the Saskatchewan economy, the Saskatchewan fabric, the Saskatchewan way of life, and gave a blueprint for ideas and thoughts which we can carry on as a government and as a legislature.

And they were clearly identified as health and education and agriculture, environment, the quality of life in our province. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that anyone who took the time to read that document as presented by Her Honour, knows that there is substance and value, and that this government is prepared to act on that substance and value.

I'd like to touch on a number of the topics briefly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I walk through the throne speech, and make a few comments on some of the things that arise thereof.

I'd like to touch on the topic of health because health is something that seems to arise in this legislature on a fairly regular occasion. Health is debated quite heatedly in our province, and it's always been a large political issue, if you will. It's something that the members opposite continue to fall back on. And once again, as we get into the topic of health, I would just like to quote once more from *The Commonwealth*, because I think it does indicate where the members opposite stand here. And once again, this is the article by the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, and he says about his own party,

he says:

Give us health care as an issue, and because of our history we feel relatively safe. Give us almost any other issue, and we'd rather retreat to health care.

So I guess that's why in the speech presented by Her Honour, that health naturally would be number one because it's been a priority of this government over the last seven years. We have done many of the things that needed to be done in the field, and I don't need to go back over the things that other members have mentioned so eloquently here.

The issue of extra billing came up today in this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think it's well recognized who kept extra billing on and who took it off. And my seat mate talked about nursing homes, and moratoriums of nursing homes, and who has built them, who has built the hospitals in rural Saskatchewan. So I think those things have already been covered in this debate, and I won't belabour the point.

But the throne speech does talk about the Saskatchewan health care card. And I think I join with other members on my side in taking a tremendous amount of pleasure in seeing this new technology, this new way of delivering service to the people of Saskatchewan brought forward. And it was nice to see it mentioned in the throne speech as something that will be continued upon, improved upon, as a method of delivery of service.

And once again I also take a great deal of pleasure in it because the members of the Hallelujah Chorus had a lot to do with the Saskatchewan plastic health card. Our chairman of our health committee is the member from Rosthern. And I know the long hours that that member spent in developing ideas from within this caucus, both cabinet and back bench, so that we in Saskatchewan would be a leader in world technology, so that we in Saskatchewan indeed, I feel, will be copied by many other jurisdictions in North America and around the world.

And I just say congratulations to the member from Rosthern, a member of that chorus who was shouted down when he made his speech the other day, by members of the opposition — tried to shout him down as he talked about these important issues.

I'd also like to comment in the area of health, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the undertaking and the initiative to enhance the breast cancer identification problem in our province. And that is in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Cancer Foundation, who I personally, and my family, owe a great deal of gratitude to for the experiences of 1987 which all of you know about, and I guess because my feelings are so strong in this issue in that breast cancer is today one of the, if not greatest killers of females in our province.

(1615)

I think it's appropriate that it should be mentioned in the throne speech, that it should be talked about in the context of health in our province, and that no one, no one

in this province could possibly vote against the Saskatchewan Cancer Foundation and an initiative which we hope will save lives in the early identification of breast cancer in our female population. And I think that any member in this House that would seriously consider voting against that has got misplaced priorities.

I'd also, in the area of health, Mr. Deputy Speaker, like to talk about an item in there that spoke about integrated health facilities. And some members may not understand what is talked about, but I believe that this may be the wave of the future, and in particular in my city of Moose Jaw which, although I don't represent it, I consider to be my home town. Because an old-age care facility, a private hospital, and a union hospital have worked together over the last two years to come up with a plan to enhance the care giving and the health facilities for Moose Jaw and region.

And I don't know if it's going to come to pass, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I think when three separate entities like that can get together, bury their differences that they've had in the past, and talk about integration, of providing service, of using common services to cut costs, and yet come up with what I feel to be one of the finest facilities in our province, I think that deserves recognition. And it may not work that way in every community. There may be other needs, may be other wants.

But I think you'll see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people in our province are willing to work together, to work at integration to improve the lot of all. And I look forward to working with these people in Moose Jaw. It involves rural R.M.s, city council, people all through the health system as they work on this particular plan. And I look forward over the next couple of years of working with them. And I'm just glad that recognition was given in the throne speech to this type of initiative, because I think it'll pay large dividends in the future in our province.

I'd now like to go on to the area of education, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because once again it's something that derives a lot of debate in this particular legislature. It's something that we all feel is important in our society. We pride ourselves in the fact that we have so many bright, intelligent people from this province who are achieving many things inside our province and around our country and indeed around the world. Our children are some of the brightest and best educated people in the world, and I don't think anybody can argue with that.

And what particularly caught me in the throne speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we talk about advancing the areas of education, was the Saskatchewan Communications Advanced Network or SCAN. And I like this, because in a throne speech we attempt as government to be looking into the future. We want to be new, you want to be innovative, and you want to be forward looking. You want to provide the public with ideas which they can grab hold of and grasp in their hand, and then implement down the road.

And I find it curious, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all through this throne speech debate the members opposite have knocked this government and knocked this throne speech for being devoid of new, innovative, forward-looking

ideas. And obviously, they don't know what an idea is, as the member from Swift Current says, or they don't know what innovation is, and they definitely aren't forward looking.

And that's sad, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the members opposite would continue to look in the past — back seven, eight, nine years ago — when here, staring them in the face in the field of education, is a forward, innovative-looking idea.

And it is that way because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you realize in your riding, as many members on this side of the House do, is that we have large sprawling rural areas in our province, areas like Thunder Creek, which I represent. And sometimes the opportunity for people to further their education isn't there, to perhaps people that have gone through their high school years, they didn't have the opportunity at the time for post-secondary education, or they took some post-secondary education either in a university or a technical school or one of the other institutions around our province, and they would like to further that education. But because of work commitments, because of family commitments, indeed, perhaps financial commitments, they don't feel at this time that they're prepared to drop what they're doing and seek that education elsewhere.

And if we can provide some of those opportunities through this particular initiative, then we will provide equity to the population of this province. And I can only think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, particularly of the words of the member from Cumberland last night as he spoke about northern Saskatchewan. He spoke about people up there wishing to further their opportunities. He spoke about the member from Maple Creek being in northern Saskatchewan and advancing new ideas, and advancing the ability of Northerners to work within their own area and to work for the new mines and the construction which is going on up there.

And if we can help those people enter that work-force through this new technology, then I believe that we as the government have been new, innovative, and forward looking. And I can't understand how any member opposite could vote against such an initiative.

So I'm going to look with great interest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, upon the member from Cumberland as he stands in his place and votes on the main motion. It will be very interesting what he thinks about this initiative.

And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to move on to an area which is near and dear to me. It's an area that is so important to our province. And that's the area of agriculture in our economy.

It says in the address by Her Honour that the Department of Agriculture will now become the Department of Agriculture and food. I think that's an important identification as this province moves into the 1990s, because when we talk about agriculture and food, I believe there are some windows of opportunity which have been opened up to the province of Saskatchewan with recent world events.

And I think about the dramatic shift in the world economy, the dramatic shift of dollars to the Pacific Rim. And I am told that 40 per cent of the world's capital now resides in that area of the world — that part of the Pacific Ocean which is opposite Canada and the United States.

And I think of those dollars, of that economic wealth and power. I think of the large populations which reside there — populations that are obviously aggressive, industrious; people who are moving up the economic scale, moving up the ladder, bettering themselves. And I think, what better opportunity for a province which is steeped in agricultural history, which has the best cost producers in the world, bar none. And I think, what an opportunity, when you talk about agriculture and food, with a market like that.

We've sold these people our raw products, our potash, our uranium. And I believe in the type of societies that are evolving there, the type of dollars that will be available, that the area of food will also become very important, and we should take advantage of those opportunities.

And I think also of the recently signed Canada-U.S. free trade arrangement. And you and I both know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though it may be a bit of a mystery to the members opposite, that Canada and the United States, particularly western Canadians, do a tremendous amount of trade in the area of food. And be that beef on the hoof or somebody's steak on the barbecue in California, it's been big business for western Canada and big business for Saskatchewan.

And it would be absolutely ludicrous for us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not to look at that agreement in depth and not to do everything that we possibly could as a province in the area of trade to take advantage of the opportunities that are there before us. And these are opportunities in processing and packaging; opportunities for producers in this province to get into the value added sector; and indeed, opportunities for people in our towns and villages and cities to participate in the agricultural strength of our province, and the agricultural strength of the things that we produce, and the things that we will produce down the road to meet those markets.

And it means that there are opportunities for our trading partners in other parts of the world — Pacific Rim, Europe, and elsewhere — to look at Saskatchewan and look at Canada as a place to come and build and develop things related particularly to the food area, because under that agreement, with a certain percentage of Canadian content, if you will, those products can then move freely across the 49th parallel into that huge American consumer market.

And this is a market, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that runs into the absolute hundreds of billions of dollars — just the grocery market, just the consumer down there who goes to the supermarket once a week and fills his grocery cart. And it's an ideal opportunity for us to take advantage of whatever is offered under that agreement.

And we as legislators, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would not be fulfilling our mandate to the voters of this province if we did not pursue that agreement with all the vigour and

strength that we possibly can muster as a government, because to do otherwise, as the members opposite would suggest, could stagnate this province and the western part of our country for decades to come.

I want to give you an example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of an area that is near and dear to me which I think would have significant economic returns for our province. It means the Pacific Rim. It means something which we can do to provide jobs. And currently we don't, at least we don't do very much of it. We've allowed our American neighbours to the south to monopolize the market, and that's in the area of long-fibre alfalfa.

Now I know that's perhaps going to go over the heads of some members in the legislature, and I'm sorry if I don't explain myself well, but I hope the members opposite listen because they might learn something about agriculture in our province.

Long-fibre alfalfa is the process, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whereby alfalfa is baled in the field, is then taken and protein tested. And if it's up to specification, it is then put into a compactor and squeezed down and dehydrated into a manageable size and then it is shipped by rail or truck to a container facility and is exported.

Now there's two big markets in the world right now for long-fibre alfalfa. One is in the southern United States, in dairy farms, and the other one is the Pacific Rim. Last year, the figures which I was able to obtain, said that this market was \$70 million U.S., and it primarily came out of the north-west American states in the irrigation blocs in those states.

(1630)

That market — and that primarily went to Japan — that market is expected to double within two years, double because, as the dairy industry is becoming more acceptable, as the beef industry is becoming more acceptable in the Pacific Rim, they are finding that they need this particular product to achieve the type of production that is desired. Now that's \$140 million U.S. And the product that is grown in Saskatchewan, the product that is grown in Alberta, is just as good, if not better, in most years than that what is grown in the United States.

We have an opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to access that market, to develop it and trade with our partners in the Pacific Rim who, quite frankly, when it comes to balance of trade deficits, we don't do very well with. And it's something which we do naturally well here, it's a strength and it's something that can be expanded. And it has ramifications for places like Moose Jaw and Swift Current, the nearest urban areas, the nearest centres of transportation. Moose Jaw is a rail hub.

There's no reason that the product can't be grown in the new irrigation districts, moved to Moose Jaw or Swift Current and shipped to the West Coast as well as it is being done in the United States of America. And I'd say we'd be remiss if we didn't take care of those opportunities.

We have opportunities in packaging — things like oriental noodles — where we presently ship the soft white wheats to Asia, manufacture them, package them, and ship them back. Those are opportunities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which we must grab hold of. They're opportunities that allow us to access the American market because we can produce the product cheaper than anyone in the world. The figures are there, and it's just a matter of the will to move forward in those areas. And I'm sure that red meat has just as many areas to move in. That's why I'm glad that this area of the throne speech was identified clearly. That's why it was changed from the Department of Agriculture to agriculture and food so that those windows of opportunity are not lost to us, and I just commend the people in that department for moving in this particular direction.

But I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we always have to contrast that. I know, I hate to have to come back and be negative all the time, but we hear so much negative comment from the members opposite that you have to set the record straight. And I think about the comments of the — I think he was the member for Touchwood or, no not Touchwood — the Hon. Gordon MacMurchy, the guru of NDP agriculture.

An Hon. Member: — You can take the word "honourable" off.

Mr. Swenson: — Well I know he isn't any more, but Gordon MacMurchy, anyway, who . . . long-standing member of this legislature and long-standing agricultural minister, and I'm told the person who the members opposite continually run to whenever they need some insight into rural Saskatchewan. And I must say that it's a misguided insight because this same gentleman, when he was minister of Agriculture of this province, came out with a statement in 1980 about how we should sow this province wall to wall with wheat. Now can you imagine a minister of Agriculture whose policy statement to the farmers of this province was to sow this province wall to wall with wheat. Can you imagine putting all your eggs in the one proverbial basket, if you will — a monoculture, for those of you that understand rotational cropping and a few other things, and what you need for soil conservation.

But he advised the farmer of this province to put all his eggs in one basket in a period of rising interest rates, knowing full well that the economics of continual grain farming, the input costs attached to 22 per cent interest rates, made it one of the most ludicrous policy statements ever made in this province.

And we are reaping the benefits of that statement to this very day. And it's sad to say that the party opposite hasn't gone much further in their agricultural policy than the statements made by Gordon MacMurchy in 1980 when he told the farmers in this province to grow only one crop — wheat. Now that kind of foresight the land can't stand, and that kind of foresight the farmer can't stand.

And we contrast that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to some of the things mentioned in the throne speech. It talks about the agricultural credit corporation. And the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan is not perfect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but at least they try; at least they're

forward-looking; and they are planning on implementing some financing arrangements for the farmers of this province — arrangements that were talked about by farmers the fall of 1987 as members toured the province listening to the wants and wishes — expanded opportunities to finance their home quarters; expanded opportunities to vendor mortgages; expanded opportunities to continue farming and prospering in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as this government diversifies and provides them with new opportunities and new markets to take advantage.

And I think it's important also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because this government does not walk away from those responsibilities, it goes out and talks to the farming public of this province; it comes back and presents alternatives, opportunities, and gives direction in the throne speech.

And I contrast that to the members opposite, who talk about state ownership, who have hypocrisy through their ranks. And I don't want to get into this in a way that will make the members opposite bay and howl, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'm going to say this, that the members opposite have made a big thing about members on this side of the House talking about the member from Riversdale and the predicament in which he's found himself.

And I'm not going to cast aspersions or reflect on the gentleman's personality. I'm just going to say this to the members opposite: if you are going to get yourself in the situation, as a leader of a political party in Canada in a province, of being connected with a multinational financial institution which is making money from foreclosing on farmers, you should have had the foresight and the aptitude of removing yourself from that situation before you undertook your duties as the leader of a political party; and that if a portion of your salary was derived from these actions, then you have no one to blame but yourself. And don't try and put that blame on members of the government side, because he knew full well the situation upon which he was entering and the ramifications thereof. And the responsibility, the responsibility for those actions rides directly with the member from Riversdale, not members on the government side of the House.

In the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to talk about another section that was highlighted, and that's the environment. And even though I don't know a lot about aerosol sprays and some of the other things which are deeply concerning people today, I know I did sit on my farm last summer in that 40-degree heat and I saw my crops burn up to nothing. On my farm I did not harvest one bushel of dry land grain.

And I don't know if the greenhouse effect is real or if it's imagined or if it's something that's going to affect our climate in the years to come, but I do know that it is essential for people in Canada, and indeed worldwide, to think seriously about this situation.

And I congratulate our government for putting environment into the throne speech with so much profile, talking about the issue and raising the awareness of the public of Saskatchewan, because we all have to think

about it.

Let's face it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if this greenhouse effect is for real and we had to deal with it on an ongoing situation, we might all have to move to Shellbrook in order to farm. And I've kind of got used to the old homestead and I'm not looking forward to moving. So I think that's the importance of it for our province because so much of our province relies upon climate to function properly, and it's imperative that we treat these environmental things with the utmost respect.

An area that I was pleased was mentioned in there under the environment, because I think it fits together and it fits with drought, is the fact that this government has been front and centre with irrigation development in our province. We haven't backed off on it as the members opposite did when they were government. We've gone full steam ahead.

And I know that causes some problems for people in our province, because they feel that perhaps the investment isn't worthwhile. But when I look at those 30,000 acres of irrigation which are coming on stream this year at Luck Lake on the west side of Lake Diefenbaker, I think of 30,000 acres of green, lush, crops, pastures, hay fields. I think about 30,000 acres of good environment for wildlife in this province — food, water. And I think about 30,000 acres that will be supplying feed to thousands of other producers in the southern half of this province. I think about Riverhurst, which is mentioned in the throne speech, on my side of Lake Diefenbaker, and about the approximately 30,000 acres which will be developed there over the next three to five years. And I have the same thoughts. I think about taking a very arid, dry part of Saskatchewan and making it green, making it bloom, and making it prosper.

And that goes back to what the throne speech is all about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, being new, innovative, and development orientated. And I don't know how the members opposite could disagree, how they could come to that area north of Central Butte and look at those sections and sections of very unproductive land, look at the producers who have been trying to make a living — and I know you've been there, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and just know that this is good for Saskatchewan.

This is going to supply the feed stock for the south-west corner of our province. This puts a major feed producing area within 120 miles of the United States border, and that is so very important for the beef industry, hog industry, the whole entire red meat industry in our province.

And once again I think to centres like Swift Current and Moose Jaw. Moose Jaw recently, between its two packing plants, has had over 50 jobs announced. That may not seem like a lot of jobs in the context of our province, but believe me, for a city like Moose Jaw those are big numbers. Moose Jaw, unlike many other cities in our province, doesn't have natural resources in abundance close by. It doesn't have many of the advantages that other centres have. What it relies upon is a large agricultural trading area and the fact that the people in those packing plants — with, I might add, some help from

the Government of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada — have decided that because of our commitment, our vision with this irrigation project and others, that they have decided to expand those packing plants and add 50 jobs, fairly high-paying jobs, to the city of Moose Jaw. And that's in contrast, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the period for 1971 to 1982 when none of that occurred in the city of Moose Jaw, even though it was represented at that time by members of the New Democratic Party.

(1645)

And I just say to the member for Moose Jaw South, who's in the Legislature this afternoon, I want you to think real hard about the numbers of jobs that have occurred in the city of Moose Jaw through development and projects over the last seven years as compared to the number of jobs in that other 11-year period; think about Canada Packers; think about Moose Jaw Packers which resides in his riding and is expanding to this day because of some of these things. And I believe there are more developments which can take place in the city of Moose Jaw if that city has the initiative and the will to go out and grasp them, because there are going to be many side benefits come out of this irrigation project and others like it which can provide jobs and opportunities for people in those larger urban centres. And I just hope they have the wisdom and the foresight to move on those initiatives.

Another area I think that's very important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the life of Saskatchewan and the quality of life, some of the areas that this government has done in the way of pensions and pension reform. And I think particularly about the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, undoubtedly one of the best pension programs ever provided for in this country. Once again, it's highlighted in the throne speech and is going to be expanded upon. And I would think that any member of the New Democratic Party would be proud to stand in his place and vote on a pension plan that was so good.

We have 47,000 members in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan already in this province. Eighty per cent of them are women — 80 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Forty per cent of those are home-makers. Obviously those numbers tell us that there was a crying need out there, that there were people in our province — home-makers, part-time workers, self-employed people — who didn't have access to a pension plan.

The NDP have always prided themselves in representing these groups, but for 11 long years they sat in this House and did not address those people. Today, 47,000 Saskatchewan citizens are involved in a program which will go to insuring their futures as they reach the age of retirement. And I for the life of me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, cannot envision any member of the New Democratic Party standing and voting against such a measure.

I guess finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to get on to the area of public participation. It seems an area that causes a tremendous amount of trouble for the members opposite. Not for the member for Regina North East because he's brought his deepest, darkest secrets out in the public and we appreciate that. But the rest of the members opposite

have a great deal of problem with this particular topic. I guess the problem is, everybody's doing it. I think there was a song sort of like that some time past, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but everybody's doing it, you know. We got socialists all over the world joining with Margaret Thatcher, and it's kind of ironical, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we'd have that little combination — but they're tangoing out there.

We've got people in France, socialist President; people in Australia, socialist Prime Minister; people in New Zealand, socialist Prime Minister. We've even got communists, you know, those people that built Berlin walls and that sort of stuff. These people are waltzing with Margaret Thatcher — China, Soviet Union, Hungary. Everybody says public participation's the way to go, everybody except the people sitting opposite in the Saskatchewan legislature.

In every instance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where public participation has gone forward in our province, or indeed around the world, we've seen the jobs are added, not deleted. Why would you want to be out of step with the rest of the world?

And I would like to quote an article, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of March 6, 1989, from the *Star-Phoenix*, and I guess it sums up the hypocrisy which we've heard in this legislature from the members opposite. And I think it'll sum up the feeling of the people in this province. And it says:

The only criticism due the NDP is in allowing MLAs like the member for Saskatoon Nutana and the member from Regina Rosemont to make fools both of themselves and of opposition leader, Roy Romanow, by attacking privatization and uranium development . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. Members are not allowed to use other members' names. I would ask the member to refrain from that.

Mr. Swenson: — I'm sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I do apologize for that slip of the tongue, and I will say:

. . . (the member from Riversdale), by attacking privatization and uranium development, both once admirable, if unpublicized, initiatives.

And that is the hypocrisy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which resides on that side of the House. It is hypocrisy which will be exposed to the public of Saskatchewan. And I guess it is why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they are so critical of a throne speech which is new, it's innovative, and it is forward looking, as I have identified in my speech today.

And I cannot believe that the members opposite can stand in their places with a clear conscience and vote against this initiative or the other ones I've identified today in the throne speech presented by this government.

So it will be a pleasure for me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to support the motion presented by the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and hope that the members

opposite look into their consciences when we vote on the presentation made by Her Honour last Wednesday.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the few minutes that remain here before 5 o'clock, Mr. Speaker, I would like to outline a few of the things that I want to talk about in my address in reply to the throne speech.

But before I do, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate, along with other members, the work that our Lieutenant Governor — our new Lieutenant Governor, Her Honour Sylvia Fedoruk — has been doing, not only with her delivery of the throne speech here, right here in this Assembly, but also the work that she's been doing around the province.

I had the pleasure, Mr. Speaker, of welcoming Her Honour to Prince Albert for her first official visit this winter. She was there to open the winter festival officially, on behalf of the city and on behalf of the winter festival committee. And the way that Her Honour approached the job, and the enthusiasm with which she sawed the logs and cut the ribbons and went to different locations where the winter festival activities were taking place, she was very well received by the people of Prince Albert, and I want to pass that message on through you, Mr. Speaker, to our Lieutenant Governor.

I want to say also that it was good to hear the Lieutenant Governor read the Speech from the Throne in a manner which is befitting of the office. When a person is in a position of Lieutenant Governor, I think it's very important that you do these things in a manner which is acceptable to the government side members and to the opposition side members, because after all, you're representing the entire population of Saskatchewan, and she did that with dispatch, and for that I would congratulate her as well.

In addition to that, I would like just to wish Her Honour the best for achieving her goals during her term of office.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — In this address to my reply to the throne speech debate, Mr. Speaker, I intend on touching on three areas. I want to talk about some education and health policies of the government, and some of the problems created in the province of Saskatchewan. I want to talk for a while about the taxation policy. And last of all, I want to turn to what I consider to be a real travesty on democracy in this province, and that is the gerrymander that this government is now perpetrating on the people of Saskatchewan.

But before I address those issues, Mr. Speaker, I want to mention what a pleasure it has been for me over the last year to listen to people in my constituency and other parts of the province, and to hear the enthusiasm that they are greeting our leader, the member from Riversdale, wherever he goes in this province.

And everywhere I go they tell me, and of course I know this because I see him more often than most people in the

legislature; he's in the province. I know that he's working hard and I know that he's going around the province and meeting with small groups and meeting with large groups and meeting with individuals, and he's listening. He's listening to the requests of organizations and he's listening to delegations. He's listening in the small towns. He's listening to business people. He's listening to farmers. He's listening in the city.

And I get the feedback from these people and they tell me that they like him. They like him because he's sincere, because he listens, and because he consults, and because he displays a belief in a system in which every group and every individual counts, which is markedly and starkedly in contrast with what the Premier of this province is showing.

They appreciate, Mr. Speaker, his ability to assess, to assess a situation. Farmers are talking to him right this week about the problems that they're having with interest rates, and they want to see action on it; problems that they're having with the drought payments, they're waiting for it. The lack of defence, the lack of defence that the Premier has shown when the oats was taken off the wheat board system. And they like the way he responds because he responds, as I mentioned again, with the concept that every person's ideas and everybody's ideas counts.

Well that's my leader, Mr. Speaker, that's my leader, the member from Riversdale, a leader with a proven track record; a proven track record in a previous government, proven track record in Saskatchewan, proven track record nationally. And he's proving himself again, and he's going to become the next premier of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to go directly, because there's only a couple of minutes left, I'm going to go directly to the problem that is being created for the electors of Saskatchewan with respect to the Electoral Boundaries Commission. And the idea here is . . . I'm looking at some numbers here, Mr. Speaker. I'm looking and comparing what's happening to the voting pattern as a result of the gerrymander that's been perpetrated by this government.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a democracy. There's a good reason for that. A democracy, a representative democracy, is a place where there's supposed to be a balance with the capitalist system, which we use, in a democracy where one person is supposed to represent one vote. And that's a very important balance. And the members opposite ought to know that, and they ought to guard that. They ought to know that, and they ought to guard that.

But exactly the opposite thing is happening now with this redistribution, Mr. Speaker — exactly the opposite is happening. Instead of the Electoral Boundaries Commission coming up and balancing off the votes so that we get a more representative system where one person equals one vote, we've got exactly the opposite happening. We've got areas of the province whose votes are counting more than people in other areas of the

province. And that is undemocratic, and that is a threat to our way of life, Mr. Speaker.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to just get back to, for us, and just to think for a minute about how our system works here in our country, and how it's worked in Great Britain, for example.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Being 5 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 p.m.

CORRIGENDA

Please note the following in the *Hansard* No. 4B Monday March 13, 1989, 7 p.m.: Page 68, last paragraph — for “bored,” please read “buoyed.” Page 73, second and third paragraphs, left-hand column and fourth paragraph, right-hand column — for “drifter(s),” please read “grifter(s).”

[NOTE: The online version has been corrected.]