

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you, and to other members of the Assembly, a group of 23 students in your gallery, grade 7 and 8 students from the Caroline Robins School in Saskatoon in that great constituency of Saskatoon Mayfair. They are accompanied today by Doug Gilmore and Jane Best. I sincerely hope that you'll enjoy your visit to the legislature today. I can't guarantee that the members are going to be on their best behaviour, but you'll have to judge that for yourselves. I look forward to meeting with you at 2:30 for pictures and also later on for refreshments. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the legislature to join with me in welcoming this group to the legislature today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and the Assembly, on behalf of my seat mate, the Hon. Graham Taylor, some 20 grade 11 and 12 students from Windthorst, from the Windthorst School. They are accompanied by their teachers, Greg Fritzsche and Mark Pfeifer, chaperons Kathy Biesenthal and Kathy Edwards. I would like all hon. members to join with me in welcoming the students. I look forward to meeting with them after question period for refreshments and questions. I would ask all hon. members to join with me in welcoming them in the usual manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, some guests seated in your gallery. They are Miss Susan Bates, the president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; Mr. Fred Herron, general secretary of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; Mr. Berny Wiens, president of the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association; Mr. Jake Volk, executive director of the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association; and Mr. Erv Boehme, who is past president of the League of Educational Administrators and Directors in Saskatchewan (LEADS), Mr. Speaker.

They are here to mark a historic day in Saskatchewan's educational history. They joined me in a press conference early this morning with the release of and our joint response to evaluation in education — the report on evaluation and education. And I would ask them to stand and be acknowledged and for all members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming them here today, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the minister in welcoming our guests from the STF

(Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation) and the SSTA (Saskatchewan School Trustees Association) and LEADS organization. They are today's leaders in the K to 12 field. I hope you have a good press conference, and I also wish you the best in your deliberations with the minister opposite. Welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Rise in Interest Rates

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Premier, and it has to do with the announcement today by the Bank of Canada of yet another jump in the interest rates to, I think it's 12.18 per cent, which as the Premier I'm sure will agree presents another serious body blow to small-business people, farmers and to Saskatchewan families — 12.18 per cent.

Mr. Premier, my question to you is this: in view of the fact that it looks as though the Prime Minister, Mr. Mulroney, and the Bank of Canada Governor, Mr. Crow, are not listening to you and to the Finance minister about how serious this continued increase in the interest rate problem is for the people in the West, and in Saskatchewan in particular, I wonder whether you would agree today to passage in this legislature, unanimously if at all possible — and I think it would be unanimously — of a resolution, a copy of which I have forwarded to you just a few moments ago, which calls on the federal government to halt further interest rate increases and to work toward a reduction of the situation?

I won't take the time to read the resolution at this point, but you have a copy; that's the thrust of it. Would you agree to this motion, right after question period, so we can send the unanimous consent of the legislature of this Assembly to Ottawa to stand up for small-business people and farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I thank the hon. member for the question. We both have had some experience in dealing with the interest rate issues. The hon. member, as deputy premier of the province of Saskatchewan prior to 1982, when interest rates were 20 per cent, sat there, Mr. Speaker, and did absolutely nothing. So what we're seeing is a deathbed repentance.

We'll take a look at the resolution, Mr. Speaker. I note that the resolution does not include a recognition and an urging across Canada of some of the interest rate programs to help farmers, small business, and the home owners of Saskatchewan, as implemented by the province of Saskatchewan and the Government of Saskatchewan.

I'm pleased for example, Mr. Speaker, to note that over 40,000 Saskatchewan home owners are getting mortgage interest protection from this government, Mr. Speaker, mortgage interest protection that was rejected by the then deputy premier of this province, rejected when interest

rates were 20 and 22 per cent. So for the hon. member to stand in this House when interest rates are 13 and 14 and urge action, when he refused to do anything when they were 20 and 21 per cent, is the height of hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier. I would direct it to the Minister of Finance, but clearly I'm disappointed, as I think anybody who is watching the proceedings of this House, at the overly partisan nature of the response by the Minister of Finance and his preoccupation with activities of seven years ago while farmers and small-business people are facing difficulties today.

So I direct this new question to the Premier directly. The Toronto Dominion Bank says that its mortgage rate for one year jumps to thirteen and a quarter per cent. That's a five-year high. If you're not going to agree to the resolution which I have forwarded to you, Mr. Premier, will you tell the House today whether or not in the forthcoming budget there is a program of relief for small businesses and for farmers and for our families against this continual rise in interest rates that we've seen the last several months, the last couple of years, as the result of the actions of Ottawa. Can we announce such a program today, Mr. Premier?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I'm pleased that the hon. member is having, I believe, a sort of deathbed repentance on his errors about refusing to help Saskatchewan people. He's trying to be more helpful when he can't do anything about it than when he could, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to indicate that, Mr. Speaker, for Saskatchewan home owners, if interest rates are 14 per cent, our government is there to help. If interest rates are 15 per cent, our government is there to help. If interest rates are 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25 per cent, the interest rates for Saskatchewan home owners, Mr. Speaker, will be nine and three-quarters per cent, no matter what the rates are, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — That's action. For small business, I can give a list of the small business interest programs. I can talk about the 6 per cent interest programs for students and student loans, Mr. Speaker. I can talk about production loans at 6 per cent for farmers. I can talk about livestock cash advances and interest-free loans, Mr. Speaker. Capital facilities programs, Mr. Speaker, with 8 per cent interest. And I am prepared to continue with a rather lengthy list, Mr. Speaker, of what this government is . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I direct this question once again to the Premier, who I really wish would take the

leadership and answer it, as opposed to the political responses by the Minister of Finance who, by the way, says that the production loan interest rate is at 6 per cent when we know full well that your government increased it to nine and three-quarters per cent several months back.

My question to you, Mr. Premier, is this. We have a crisis for small-business people; we have a crisis for farming people. Let's just take the small-business people for the moment. Interest rates are on the rise. What I hear the Minister of Finance saying is it's more of the same, and more of the same means more small businesses facing bankruptcy and going belly-up because of the crisis that exists in Saskatchewan today.

Will the Premier get up and tell this House now that he is prepared to announce a special program with respect to — just say the small businesses — the small businesses in the province of Saskatchewan to help them through this period of escalating high interest rates? How about that? Let's forget about the political speeches. How about that as a concrete course of action today for the people of this province? Okay?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well I appreciate the minister wanting me not to give a political speech while he gives one. The hon. member . . . I'm going to advise the hon. member that we do have capital facilities loan programs which many people in this province have taken advantage of at 8 per cent interest, and I have . . . As the appropriate minister has indicated, there will be major modifications to the role of SEDCO which will be of significant help to small business.

I might advise as well, Mr. Speaker, that when we talk about small business, one of the highest tax rates on small business is the NDP government in the city of Regina. And, Mr. Speaker, it is this government, this government, Mr. Speaker, that is bringing in a rebate program on the business taxes of the small business for this province, Mr. Speaker, that try and give \$10 million back to the small-business community which will be of help for them — help that was refused them in the past, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Farm Debt in Saskatchewan

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, your lack of support for Saskatchewan farmers by falling in line with Brian Mulroney and his bungling of his drought aid program has left farm families in Saskatchewan strapped for cash. On top of that, you're letting Mulroney run roughshod over them with interest rates — high interest rates.

Mr. Minister, my question to you is: will you end your stupid, counter-productive policy of charging farmers who fall into arrears with ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan) prime plus 2 per cent on their outstanding debt. Will you halt that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises the point of providing assistance to people in agriculture. I could point out to the hon. member that there are a long list of interest rate reductions and programs for people in the livestock industry as well as the grain industry. We've got the livestock cash advance, Mr. Speaker, which, for the first time in Saskatchewan history, provides money to people in the livestock business without any interest charges at all.

An Hon. Member: — Zero.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Zero interest. And the livestock people tell me across Canada that they envy Saskatchewan's livestock industry because we've got cash advances at zero per cent interest rates. The livestock industry doesn't have to go to the bank or their credit union or any place else, international people; they get cash advances at zero per cent interest rate, as the grain people had for years through the Canadian Wheat Board. Mr. Speaker, we introduced that. Now that's at zero per cent interest rates.

We have got The Farm Land Security Act to protect home owners, Mr. Speaker; we've got farm input price surveys to allow them to get information on prices right across Saskatchewan and the rest of the country. We've got a production loan program, Mr. Speaker, that is at 6 per cent money on \$1.2 billion for the first three years and at nine and three-quarters for the next seven years, Mr. Speaker. Now nobody in Canada has ever delivered a program at locked-in fixed interest rates at 6 per cent in excess of a billion dollars in Canadian history. Now we put that out for people, and in addition to the three years to pay it back, Mr. Speaker, at the request of farmers, municipal councillors, we've said you can extend it over 10 years, and they get full advantage of the 6 per cent that was there initially.

Mr. Speaker, we have got the Agriculture Credit Corporation, which will provide low-interest loans to people . . .

An Hon. Member: — Are there any more programs?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, the hon. member asked me if there are any more programs. Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order.

Mr. Upshall: — A new question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have just heard, I believe, the Minister of Agriculture in this province telling the farmers and the rest of the people in this province that he is not going to do any more to help the farmers of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Said he's done enough. My question: your policy of doing nothing, Mr. Minister, but foreclosing on Saskatchewan farmers is actually criminal. I ask you, Mr. Minister, on behalf of all farmers, if you will now immediately halt foreclosure actions on farmers until the farm economy in this province recovers?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I notice the hon. member now changed his question. I started to list the programs we have for farmers, and they didn't even let me get through it.

We've just had a Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, that will lay out, and has laid out, new initiatives that we're going to take for farmers, including having new programs for them. And now he changes the question and said, are we going to have any more programs, Mr. Speaker.

Let me just point out to the hon. member, when it comes to standing up for farmers in the past we've put an awful lot of money into their hands, and we've initiated new programs, rural natural gas, for example, that saved them hundreds of thousands of dollars even per operation. And right now we see, Mr. Speaker, as a result of that, not just 56 per cent of the feeder cattle, pardon me, 12 per cent of the feeder cattle fed here, but indeed 56 per cent of the feeder cattle now being fed here in Saskatchewan as a result of feeder finish programs, low interest loans, rural natural gas, and a combination of things that would allow us to get that done.

Then he stands up and he says, well let's change that. I liked your programs; they're all right. What about foreclosing on farmers? And he kind of looks cross ways over at his leader, Mr. Speaker, at the same time he did that.

We've been through it. Everybody in Saskatchewan and, frankly, Canada knows there's only one leader in Canada who worked, and has his company work, on behalf of the bank to foreclose on farmers, and it's the NDP leader that's sitting in the Saskatchewan legislature.

That's his legacy, Mr. Speaker, when interest rates were 20 per cent he never lifted a finger, and after that, Mr. Speaker, when he's defeated, he went and made money on the backs of the farmers working for the financial institutions. Well, Mr. Speaker, he'll live to regret that one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I'm back into the question period, prompted by the Premier's answer with respect to the foreclosures and particularly about the foreclosures of his government and, more particularly, the actions of him as the Premier and the leader of the province of Saskatchewan and Minister of Agriculture in foreclosing.

Now, Mr. Premier, my question to you is this: I have in front of me here documentation involving an order nisi of a judicial sale involving a couple called Rod Stirling McPherson and Joyce McPherson, public records of the Outlook area, where according to this document a judicial sale of farm property, sir, is going to take place March 21, 1989. And guess who the plaintiff is? The plaintiff is you, sir, the leader of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Guess who the leader and the activator of this lawsuit is? The Minister of Agriculture, the first time in the history of Saskatchewan that that has taken place.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I want to ask you this, Mr. Minister: how many more of these are there in the province of Saskatchewan that you have personally launched against the farmers of Saskatchewan today? Tell us the numbers right now.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, you notice . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. The Premier was asked a question. I believe he deserves the right to answer.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I'll say to the hon. member, the NDP members and NDP lawyers have been caught foreclosing on farmers. And, Mr. Speaker, they're trying to now say that it's okay if they can find anybody else that's ever been involved. Let me point out, Mr. Speaker, these are the people who say they're against multinationals and they're against banks and they're against high interest rates. And the very same people in the front row there, who say that they would defend the farmers, have been caught, Mr. Speaker, foreclosing on the farmer, working for the bank.

Well, Mr. Chairman, let me say, we've put over a billion dollars out to help farmers, keep them in business, help them start. They got caught, Mr. Speaker, not in government — they got caught, not in government but working for the banks, Mr. Speaker. And we know that all over this country everybody's saying, well is that true, that a socialist leader now got — bought and sold, and sold and sold, Mr. Speaker, to work for the bank to take away farmers' land and their machinery. Mr. Speaker, let me say to the hon. member, he can't get out from under it; he knows that he's in trouble on it and, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to defend farmers on this issue and any other issue against the NDP hypocrisy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Minister of Agriculture, and I have here, Mr. Speaker . . . really what I'm laughing at, Mr. Speaker, is the answer by the Premier, but not the gravity of the situation.

I have here, which I shall be tabling for the attention of the House and the public in a short few minutes, just exactly how the leader of this province, the Minister of Agriculture, the defender of farmers — how he protects farmers, how he puts out contracts on farmers by hiring lawyers to conduct these foreclosures. I will be tabling the ones that we have, just by way of a sample. But my question to you, Mr. Premier, is this: because this is a serious crisis, it's a serious crisis which goes beyond members of this House, it affects the farming families of this province of Saskatchewan, I want you to tell us now how many legal actions you have instituted personally

against the family farms of Saskatchewan, right now as of this moment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear to the public and to the hon. members. On behalf of taxpayers, on behalf of taxpayers, a Government of Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The opposition doesn't want to hear the response. Okay, well maybe you could ask your members to co-operate in the legislature. Let me say this, Mr. Speaker, some people in this legislature have personally foreclosed on farmers for profit, for profit.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I just want the opportunity to make this point, make this point. Some people have foreclosed on farmers for profit; some do it on the basis of protecting the taxpayers' money. The Government of Saskatchewan has the responsibility for taxpayers' money that is lent all across the province of Saskatchewan. We defend the taxpayers.

The member opposite, Mr. Speaker, foreclosed on farmers for profit for himself. That's the difference, Mr. Speaker. He made a personal decision to foreclose on farmers to put money in his pocket. We defend the taxpayers' money, Mr. Speaker, and we always will, but we're not going to personally get involved, as he did, working for the bank to put profit in his money on the backs of farmers, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, that you recognize me rather than the Minister of Health who's going to try to bail the Premier out.

The legislature, the Premier, and the press will be able to examine these documents. I have them here: agricultural credit corporation versus the Cairns family; the corporation versus the Boehler family. We go down the line on this.

I want to ask the Hon. Premier. The Premier says that his living isn't made by attacking farmers. The Premier of this province of Saskatchewan makes a hundred thousand dollars a year, and his job is to defend family farmers. How do you justify instructing the contracts to destroy these family farmers? Why aren't you living up and doing your job? Why are you foreclosing on them? Where's your money?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, again he can't get out from under it this way, Mr. Speaker. He made a personal decision to foreclose on farmers on behalf of the bank for profit for his firm, profit for his firm, and we just ask, Mr. Speaker, how many tens of thousands . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. I'd like to . . . Order, order. Order. Order. We have a standing rule in the House that unparliamentary language cannot be used by those speaking or by those seated. I must now ask the hon. member for Regina Elphinstone to withdraw that unparliamentary remark he just made.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I would withdraw the remark that I made to the Premier about his lying — I would.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I think that it hasn't been a clear unequivocal withdrawal. It had an inference to it, and I ask the hon. member to simply rise and to apologize, withdraw the remark, and we'll get on with question period.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I thought I had, but I do withdraw the remark.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, let me just make the point again. On behalf of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, any government will make sure that they monitor the use of taxpayers' money. We've got over a billion dollars out to helping farmers, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it's less than 1 per cent of all those that are out have any particular difficulty with respect to a legal action.

I say, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member, and I'm sure that he would agree, to protect the taxpayers' money is one thing; to have personally profited by foreclosing on a farmer — personally making the decision with a law firm, Mr. Speaker — is a significant difference. You've made the decision in your career to work for the bank and foreclose on farmers for a profit. The Premier of the province and any administrator has to protect taxpayers' money, and we make no apologies for doing that, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, who knows the facts full well, except in some areas where very selectively he does not know the facts. You made a decision too, Mr. Premier. You made a decision when you took the oath as Minister of Agriculture to defend and protect farmers for which you are taking \$100,000 profit from them and you are foreclosing on them.

And I want to read to you, particularly, from the McPherson case that I alluded to, this following clause, and ask you how you justify this. In this settlement which you offered the McPherson family — you, the biggest forecloser in the history of the province of Saskatchewan, you — you, in this settlement . . . here's the settlement that you offered the McPhersons: "The (farmers) understand and agree . . ." This is what you gave the McPherson family and the tens of others I have here.

The borrowers understand and agree that they will not in the future be entitled to receive and shall not apply for any grant, loan, cash advance, guaranteed loan, financial assistance or benefit whatsoever provided by ACS or its successor

corporations under any Act of the legislature of Saskatchewan or the regulations thereunder.

That is the so-called offer of settlement that you, as Minister of Agriculture in defence of the farmers, have given to the farmers who have run into difficulty about this. Not only do you drive the farmers off the land, you are going to guarantee that they never get back onto the land. How do you justify that and your salary?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member can't weasel out of it that easy. He says, Mr. Speaker, that my salary is profit, Mr. Speaker. Well then he says everybody's salary in this legislature is profit. The Leader of the Opposition makes almost as much as a cabinet minister or something similar. Is that profit, Mr. Speaker, is that profit? Of course it isn't profit. It's a salary for administration and for being a member of the Legislative Assembly.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let me say this: the law firm that works — and evidently I can't use their name, is that right? — it's the law firm that is associated with the name of the member from Riversdale. Mr. Speaker, that law firm works for the Bank of Nova Scotia, foreclosing on farmers for profit — for profit, Mr. Speaker, not protecting the taxpayers' money, but for profit — at the same time he stands in his place and he says he's against multinational banks; he's against any institution that would work against farmers. And he's pocketing, in his pocket, money, profit taken for . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. We can't hear the Premier. We can't hear the Premier. We can't hear the Premier, and quite frankly the noise was so loud I really couldn't tell whether he was quite finished his answer, so if he wasn't quite finished, he has the opportunity. Other than that, time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Question period is over; there'll be another one tomorrow.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to inform the House that earlier today I released **Evaluation in Education**, the final report of the advisory committee on evaluation and monitoring.

This report outlines a comprehensive strategy for evaluation, monitoring, and accountability in Saskatchewan schools. It reflects a desire on the part of all the major shareholders in education to improve the overall quality of programming and student performance, and also to communicate that to parents and the public in the most effective and professional manner possible.

The advisory committee was established in 1987 to examine all aspects of evaluation in education.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. I'd ask the hon. members to settle down so that members in the House can hear the ministerial statement that the Minister of Education is making, and I would like to hear it myself.

Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. I don't think hon. members should have to be asked two or three or four times. And for the last time, let's allow the Minister of Education to continue.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The advisory committee was established in 1987 to examine all aspects of evaluation in education and recommend improvements. All the major players in Saskatchewan's school system were represented on the committee, and I introduced those people here today earlier to the legislature, Mr. Speaker.

The report was prepared in consultation with teachers, school officials, parents, university faculty — all those with a stake in our school system, Mr. Speaker. Extensive consultation will continue during implementation of the report's recommendations. I am pleased to announce that because this undertaking was pursued in a co-operative, collaborative, and consultative fashion, Mr. Speaker, the final report has been endorsed by all — teachers, trustees, administrators, directors, and so on.

This report will help us to gauge the effectiveness of our schools more accurately. It will also help us to assess how our core curriculum is working, and provide direction for how we evaluate students, staff, and course content. It also reflects this government's commitment to keeping everyone fully involved in what goes on in the school system.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate and thank the members of the committee for a job well done. It was some 15 months, Mr. Speaker, this committee was active. There was a lot of work by a 17-member committee, which we have some of the guests here today. Many officials for all the organizations worked long and hard hours.

I know at times there was lots of debate, but it was that commitment to again keep Saskatchewan in first place across North America, Mr. Speaker, that led to this fine report, because it's that kind of determination and drive that Saskatchewan education is all about, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm happy to bring this information to the legislature, and I know that all of their efforts will bear fruits for our children all across our Saskatchewan schools over the next decade and more, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. On behalf of my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Nutana who is our education critic, I'm pleased to respond to the

ministerial announcement.

I want to respond in this fashion, Mr. Speaker. The statement which we have with us here today, I believe, would be something that we were going to have to look at very carefully.

And I'm saying, when I say "we," I mean we in the opposition; I mean we the public of Saskatchewan, and we the teachers of Saskatchewan. I do so because I fear that, underneath the language the minister has mentioned, we could have a repeat of things that we've had before, that this could really represent a wolf in sheep's clothing.

What happens in education, Mr. Minister, is you cannot steer education with an outside whip if you want it to succeed. You cannot steer it by imposing evaluations and evaluation system. The minister mentions he's done so in collaboration. I'll take his word for it, and then we'll watch to see what happens.

But I warn that we've seen this kind of thing happen before, and I want to make sure that it does not lead to something like external examinations, that it does not lead to external standards, and it does not lead to setting up systems of getting rid of teachers. For that, we'll be looking, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Effect of Higher Interest Rates

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan residents continue obviously to be affected by rising interest rates which have gone up almost weekly over the past several weeks. The government of the province of Saskatchewan has expressed a strong concern to the Government of Canada. As recently as yesterday a major Canadian bank raised its mortgage rates by one-quarter to one-half of a percentage point, and as usual other lending institutions can be expected to follow suit.

Many Saskatchewan home owners have been calling the Department of Finance, asking what effect these developments will have on the government's mortgage protection plan. I am pleased to state that the mortgage protection plan, which we started on September 1, 1986, which will be in effect until August 31, 1996, will continue to provide nine and three-quarters per cent protection on the first \$50,000 mortgage amount on new and renewed mortgages.

Since the program was implemented . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I just glanced quickly through this, but I don't think there's anything new that the government is doing. It's talking about an old program, and I wondered whether or not in fact it is a new program.

The Speaker: — Order, order. The point of order of course is a valid one. As we all know, ministerial statements should be new information that is conveyed to

the House. And the Minister of Finance I assume is doing that, and perhaps he could reassure the House that he is.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will give you that assurance. Since the program was implemented, some 40,712 Saskatchewan home owners have received 8.3 million in benefits, and approximately 1.7 million more will be added to the total by the end of this month to bring the overall amount to \$10 million.

Mr. Speaker, we have 3,691 new applications on hand, and they are receiving in the last two weeks about 1,600 transactions per week. Mr. Speaker, the turn-around time is approximately six to seven weeks.

We want to give the assurance to the people of Saskatchewan that although there will be some delay because of the turn-around time and the increase in the number of applications, all payments, Mr. Speaker, are retroactive to the date of application, and the people of this province should have that assurance.

Mr. Speaker, to date, over the life of the two mortgage protection programs, some 44,000 Saskatchewan home owners have received assistance totalling nearly \$75 million, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is precisely what we have been complaining about, and that is that this government hasn't had a new idea in four years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, in case it's escaped your attention, interest rates have gone up by three percentage points in the last year. That's almost by 25 per cent. On the balance sheets of many small businesses, Mr. Speaker, interest is the largest single expense. And this increase is enough to send some of them under.

What does the government do, and what does the minister do? He talks about a program that was introduced four years ago and had very little effect on things.

I say, Mr. Minister of Finance, if you can't do something more imaginative than to read statistics about a four-year old program, then you ought to resign and you ought to let someone else take over who will bring some real relief to farmers and business men in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 6 — An Act to amend The Wills Act

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill, An Act to amend The Wills Act.

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

MOTIONS

Federal Government's High Interest Rate Policy

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By leave of the Assembly, I would request that the following motion be introduced:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan hereby expresses its grave concern that the federal government's continuing high interest rate policy is causing increasing economic and financial hardship on Saskatchewan families, farmers, and small businesses, and that this Assembly today urges the Prime Minister of Canada to reverse the federal government's high interest policy.

As I mentioned in the question period, Mr. Speaker, I've given a copy of this to the Premier and the Minister of Finance, unfortunately both of whom are not here now. I would ask the Deputy Premier to indicate his acceptance, so that we could debate and pass this motion and give a message to Ottawa about the devastating impact of high interest rates, by leave.

(1445)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — For your information, I left the seconder vacant in the hopes that the government would second it. I'm prepared to second it, if they're prepared to introduce it. That's why the leave is being asked.

The Speaker: — Okay, okay, fine. That provides the explanation. So we have a motion before us then, moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

The member then is in effect asking for leave under rule 39. If leave is not granted, then the proposed motion simply dies. So is leave granted?

Leave is not granted.

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before the orders of the day, I'd like to table a photocopy of Court of Queen's Bench Action No. 2340, the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan versus Roderick Stirling . . . — I won't name the defendants for obvious reasons.

Agriculture credit corporation versus additional defendants.
Agriculture credit corporation versus additional defendants.
Court of Appeal of an appellant against the Minister of Agriculture and the lands branch with respect to land.

Agriculture credit corporation versus another defendant. Here's one involving the Minister of Rural Development against another farm defendant.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but in the interest of time — this is just a tip of the iceberg; there'll be more — I would like to simply table these in consequence of the question period that I had today.

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 and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Trew.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I intend on entering . . . continuing this debate on the throne speech. I want to talk about education and the Tory record. I want to talk about health and the Tory record. I want to talk about taxation and the Tory record. And then I want to talk about the stacked deck, and I'm going to talk about that first, about the constituency boundary gerrymander which violates the principles of representation by population.

But before I do that, Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment once again to just bring to your attention how much I have appreciated and enjoyed working with the Leader of the Opposition over the last two years and especially on a day like today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Riversdale, future premier of this province, has been out meeting with people, listening to people, assessing people's problems, and responding to people. And everywhere he's been, in rural Saskatchewan, in small towns, in villages, and in the cities, people are responding to him because they know that he's got the ability to lead in economic management of this province. They trust him with health and social services and education, and they know he's got a proven track record in intergovernmental affairs. And when it comes to debating with the government members opposite, there's no one there that can hold a candle.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know we're going to have a very tough time in this province when we get into government, to put it back on its feet again. But we are showing, and people are responding to the confidence that we have in our leader, in the member from Riversdale. And I too feel very confident that even though it's going to be difficult to put things back into place again in this province because of the massive debt, because we have the highest taxation ever in this province, and because we have people moving out of this province in droves, we're going to have to do it.

Yes, Saskatchewan will lead again, Mr. Speaker. We will lead again in economic management. We will lead again in health and education.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk now about the Tory manipulation of the electoral boundaries in Saskatchewan.

Last week, after the throne speech was read, we had

tabled on our desks the final report of the boundaries commission that was placed on the table here. And it showed the new boundaries, and it showed how the Premier of this province is now trying to manipulate the rules in a sort of a Ben Johnson attempt to win at all costs, and abuse — at the same time abuse the concept of representation by population.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that that is wrong. It is wrong. It is dead wrong. And I think the Tories opposite should pay attention to this because they should take it back to their caucus because they ought to understand that what they are really doing is undoing the fundamental principle on which our democratic system is based, and that is representation by population. It is not only jeopardizing the electoral system here in the short run, but it will also jeopardize the ability of their children in the future to elect a government on that basis.

Why do I say so, Mr. Speaker? You know, over the principle of representation by population, wars have been fought. They've been fought in America; they've been fought in Europe; they've been fought in Great Britain; all parts of Europe. The concept of representation by population is fundamental to democracy, and here we have a government that is going to violate it.

Representation by population is very simple, yet it's very profound. It means that your vote, Mr. Speaker, is equal to my vote. It means your colleague's vote is equal to my colleague's vote. There is no such thing as weighted voting; each vote would count the same.

You want to consider for a minute, Mr. Speaker, a committee made up of four people, where a decision has to be made, where each one of the four people has an equal vote. Two vote one way and two vote the other way; then we have a tie. You have to have a three to one to break it.

But if one of those votes is weighted so that it's only worth say, point six or point eight of a vote, then two people can run a majority. That's weighted voting, and that's exactly what is happening with this scheme that is being perpetrated by the Premier opposite. And I'm speaking to this, Mr. Speaker, because it's important not only for partisan reasons, it's important whether you're a Conservative or a Liberal or a New Democrat. Any prospective voter would understand that.

Why do we need that system, Mr. Speaker? You see, Canada is based on a capitalist system; we have a capitalist tradition like the rest of the free world in Europe, in the United States of America, Great Britain in particular. And I contrast that with the system of communism or with the system of Fascism.

Now raw capitalism, which we don't have here but from which it evolved is . . . the unbridled fashion of raw capitalism is a system which is governed and which is run by the powerful which depends either on dollars or on bullets or on guns or on bombs. That's what unbridled capitalism is. Unbridled capitalism means that person with the most dollars has the most votes; or that person with the most bullets or the most guns has the most votes, or the most power; or that person with the most bombs

has the most votes. That's what unbridled capitalism is.

So what we have evolved in this country through the centuries borrowed from Great Britain is a balance to that, a balance of representation by population, a balance which we give the name democracy. And in that situation, that is where one person equals one vote. And using that system we are able to counteract the bad effects of raw unbridled capitalism.

Now every one of us here, Mr. Speaker, you included, maybe a little more than me, but every one of us here has a capitalist background. We are born into it. Every one of us adheres to some forms of capitalism. I defy you to find me a person probably in this room that doesn't. Everybody believes in ownership of a home; everybody would like to be able to own a car. That's what capitalism is based on — ownership.

But if it's let to go too far that ownership tends to accumulate as it did in 18th century Europe. In this case, if it was let to go too far the capitalism would accumulate and we would have monopolies again. That's why my ancestors came to this country — to get away from that kind of a feudal system. So we need a balance, Mr. Speaker.

Now I want us to take a look briefly, Mr. Speaker, at what is happening as a result of this commission report. What has this government done? The purpose of the commission, if it was to support this concept of democracy, the balance, the delicate balance we need of one person, one vote, would have been set up so that it could equalize the voting structure across the country, across this province.

But what has it really done? I will give you two examples. What it's really done is weighted the vote. And the two examples I'm going to use are Morse, the constituency of Morse, and the constituency of Regina Lake Centre. And what's happened after the redistribution? Morse constituency had 7,757 voters before the redistribution; now it's got 7,475 voters, Mr. Speaker. The number of voters have decreased there.

At the same time, in the city of Regina, Regina Lake Centre, which had 11,744 voters to begin with, that has now increased, has been increased as a result of this gerrymander, to 12,254. So what happens is instead of evening out the voting powers this gerrymander has increased the voting power of people in one constituency and decreased them in another.

Morse, where the population is decreasing, has gone down by 282 votes; Regina Lakeview has gone up by 510 votes. The spread is increasing. In other words, somebody living in the constituency of Regina Lakeview has only got point six of a vote for every vote given in the Morse constituency. Now somehow that does not smack to me of democracy. It's a violation of this very basic principle of which I have talked.

So I ask, I ask the members opposite to go back, take a look at all of these ridings, take a look at all of them, and work the system so that it's working towards democracy. I know that you're losing the political battle, that you've

got problems in health and that you've got problems in education. But face up to those things, then come out and ask for a real election where every one person counts, a system where every one person counts and we don't go into a weighted system.

(1500)

Don't put us in the situation please, don't put us into a situation that Ben Johnson put the country in, of winning at all costs, because if you do, you will not only disgrace yourself, you'll disgrace the entire nation, as he did.

Mr. Speaker, when I was preparing myself for this reply to the throne speech, I noticed that this being March, I was reminded of a poem that I learned as a young lad. And before I get into the portion on education, I want to put this poem into the record because it sort of gives a background of some of the thinking of a lot of the immigrants from the Slavic countries, particularly Ukraine, that came to this province, people who worked to build this province up.

It's a poem that was written by Taras Shevchenko who was born March 9, 1814 and died March 10 in 1861. Shevchenko was to Ukrainians as Burns is to the Scots, as Shakespeare is to the British. And the poem goes like this, and I will read into the record eight lines of poem in Ukrainian. Then I want to give you my translation of it, Mr. Speaker. And the poem goes like this:

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian. See end of *Hansard*)

A translation, Mr. Speaker, goes something like this. It says:

Study and educate yourselves, my brethren;
Think and read widely, and learn from other people.
Always remember your responsibility to your mother
country,
For those who neglect their own people will be punished
by God,
And foreigners will not accept you, nor will they allow you
into their domains.

That poem, Mr. Speaker, was almost a compulsory item for any young lad living in a community like I lived in when I was a young fellow, whose parents were of Ukrainian ancestry. It was taught because in it, it brings out the value of education, and more than that, it was taught to all the youngsters because it taught them that they were their brothers' keepers, and that you had to look after your own household first before you went out and tried to make a hero of yourself elsewhere. Because if you try to do it another way, you'd be scorned when you were abroad.

And I mentioned it here today, Mr. Speaker, because I think that the lessons of Shevchenko are equally valid at this time, about how we should be stressing education in this province and about how we should be concerning ourselves being our brothers' keeper.

I turn now to the subject of education here in the province

of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, throughout the '70s and through the '60s and back in the '50s, when I started university and went through it, those of us that graduated went out of the University of Saskatchewan with a feeling of pride and with a feeling of confidence. We had at that time the feeling that . . . and we knew that our university had a reputation which could compare with any across North America and even into Europe. But what has happened, Mr. Speaker? If you go down to the university now, and you ask some students who are there, and even ask the professors, do they still feel that same confidence, they will tell you, no. They will tell you in fact that what has happened is that the quality of the education at the University of Saskatchewan has, in some cases, deteriorated, and they feel more is coming.

And they've gone on a long search. They've searched as to why has this happened. They wondered, were their internal priorities wrong; were some of their methods lacking? Was the problem because the students were not coming in of the calibre that perhaps they would have liked? And the resounding answer in all of those cases was no, Mr. Speaker. No. They're coming up with the reason. They're finding that what has really happened is that there has been a gross neglect and underfunding on the part of the government. That's what the real problem is in education.

The signals are very clear, Mr. Speaker. The signals at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon are very clear. Last year we had a faculty strike. Last year we had an administrative press release which asked for more funding. This year, another press release which specified that they were desperately in need of \$11 million operating money, plus another 90 million — 90 million to meet the objectives of what they should be doing. And it was backed up by another signal, a signal by those who govern the institution, the senate and the board of governors, when they had to implement this year once again, Mr. Speaker, a quota on arts and science, repeated, something that they did not want to have to do.

The University of Regina has also found itself in difficulty. They had a 5 million debt two years ago and they set up a plan of action. They said, all right, we will try to eliminate this debt. They had a plan that they would eliminate the debt over a series of a few years, but due to government underfunding they were unable to do that. At this stage now, they find themselves \$7 million in debt. I guess maybe, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons that the people at the university are looking more and more to our leader, the member from Riversdale, to right the problems that they have.

When we built these universities, Mr. Speaker, one of the key concepts was the concept of accessibility. Accessibility meant that any student who had the background, the academic background, the ability and the desire to go to university should be able to do so. And for all of the course of the years in the life of the University of Saskatchewan they were able to do so, until two years ago when, as a result of underfunding by this government, they finally put on quotas on education.

And the quotas applied not only to those colleges which had . . . to which there was limited enrolment, such as the

College of Medicine or veterinary science, but applied in this case to the College of Arts & Science, which is the starting point for many others.

When my leader was in government and Allan Blakeney was the premier, we accomplished the access to university three ways. We made sure that there were no quotas on students going to the university. At the University of Regina there was a university entrance program for which adult students could come and go to the university even though they didn't meet the grade 12 standard. They could take it while they were there and meet the standard. And the government of Premier Blakeney, of which our member from Riversdale, our present leader, was also a member, also initiated off-campus class delivery to various points across the province, including my city of Prince Albert.

Now what's happened? Under the present leader, under the present Premier, the universities have been so starved that they're faced with a question of what do they do. Do they lock the doors to the students, or do they let the quality of education deteriorate to a state which would be completely unacceptable. They have been forced to make a choice, Mr. Speaker, between quality and accessibility, and that's a choice they should never have had to make. As a result of that choice, we now find 400 students per year who are unable to attend the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, and that's people from all over the province.

As people in the various parts of the province hear of this, and when they find that their grandchildren or their relatives are not able to attend, they are highly offended because every one of them pays taxes. And they're willing to pay taxes for education, but they are not willing to accept this concept of their youngster, their grandchild or their child not being able to attend a university. It's put right into our value system and we see it disappearing.

What are we getting under this government? Not only do we have the financial restriction that the government has placed by reducing the bursary program, not only do we have the academic restriction by a person who has to get a certain percentage, we also now have a quota system on education, as if we should be educating only a certain number of our students.

And I question the wisdom of that, Mr. Speaker. I question the wisdom of that because at this time in the life of Canada, at a time when Japan is targeting to educate 50 per cent of their youngsters in post-secondary education, we haven't even reached 20 per cent. We should be targeting at least 30 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

There is other evidence that we shouldn't have quotas. The university itself has done studies of those students who are in that range between 65 per cent and 73 per cent averages. They've done studies . . . these are the people that are going to be excluded, and they've found that they fare just as well in their first year as the students with the 73 and above; that there really is not a basis on those marks on which to exclude the students.

We know that the well-being of a nation, Mr. Speaker, depends on its education system. It's not difficult to see,

but you can compare Europe, U.S., or Japan to any third-world country. In most third-world countries they're just struggling to develop teacher training institutions, and they're struggling to expand their literacy levels. We should be mindful of that, Mr. Speaker.

Let's take a look at what's happening at SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology), Mr. Speaker. As a result of the bungling of the government, we find that the workers, the instructional staff at SIAST is on the verge of a strike. They've taken a strike vote. They are four years without a contract, Mr. Speaker. The staff is demoralized. They're demoralized for two reasons: because you've had a series of top-down decisions being made; and too many staff who have been there for a long time have been made to feel that they don't count.

Now the minister will reply and say, well it's at arm's length, it's a corporation now. I wish it were at arm's length, Mr. Speaker, but the minister still has his fingers in there, and the minister and his deputy still has his fingers in there. And as long as the minister and his deputy still have his fingers in there, the Premier has his fingers in there.

We need, Mr. Speaker, to take a look at what happened in SIAST with respect to the community colleges. The community colleges were one of the success stories, along with the community schools of the . . . one of the success stories of the '70s. Now what's happened with the community colleges is that they had their mandate restricted, Mr. Speaker. And as a result, we found that people were told, well they can't . . . there are certain things that you can't teach in a community college.

Community colleges were set up so that they could be community based, and the programs that they put up in them and that they developed in them and produced in them would be based on the needs and the wants and the desires in the community. This government didn't want that. They thought that those things should be run privately. And as a result, there are things that were done in the past that are no longer able to be done. For example, passing on the culture of the community — particularly valuable to new citizens of Canada, particularly valuable to them. Those things are gone.

(1515)

And what's happened in K to 12 education, Mr. Speaker? When we had Allan Blakeney as a premier, and our member from Riversdale was deputy premier of that time, we raised the quality of teaching by raising the qualifications of teaching from a compulsory two years to a compulsory four-year program. School busing was made universal, and thus schools were made much more easily accessible for all students. I mentioned earlier, community schools were built.

And you know, at that time, one of the things that we tried to do at the local level to institute and to ensure that schools would survive, we tried to set up a tax system so that the property taxpayer would not be bearing an increasing proportion of the taxes to pay the schools.

Clearly right now what's happened is the exact opposite — it's exact opposite. There was one time, there was one time when the taxes were borne about equally, and the province was paying up to about 60 per cent. That's now slipped, and it's slipping slowly so that the school boards are having to cough up a larger and larger share of the tax dollar.

There's a good reason for doing that, for going in the direction of making sure that the tax burden for schools on the local taxpayer does not get too high. One of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, is because of the changing population demographics. That is, there are fewer and fewer people in this province now with children going to school, which means that there isn't as much self-interest in people getting their taxes up to . . . and lobbying for local taxes to pay for the schools, yet we know that we have to have our schools.

Of course the other reason is just to maintain equal opportunity, Mr. Speaker; make sure that children in your constituency have just as good a school as children in somebody else's constituency.

Now the first term, I must admit, in the first term, and to her credit, the minister, the former minister of Education, funded education — K to 12 education — quite generously, and that was accepted. But since then something has happened. They've sort of gone berserk over there and education is completely short-changed.

And you ask any school board now — and ask, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the school board in which you reside — if their schools are not going into disrepair at this time. And you ask, and if the school board has not used up any surpluses that it has already had; you ask them if their buses are not getting old; you ask them if they haven't had to curtail or cut some of the special programs.

So at a time, and at a time when our community school concepts should be expanded so that more and more children would have adequate snacks and not come to school hungry, all of these things are being curtailed. We're going in the wrong direction, Mr. Speaker.

I want to turn very briefly, Mr. Speaker, to mention and to contrast what is happening in the health field. We've heard a lot, Mr. Speaker, about what new initiatives this government is saying they're going to take. But the words that they speak simply do not bear up with the actions.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, in the budget speech they said that health was going to become a priority. And I want to contrast, Mr. Speaker, what the health scheme was like before these people took power with what it's like now. When Allan Blakeney was the premier, and when our member from Riversdale, our present leader, was the deputy premier, we had no waiting lists of 10,000 people. We had no people who died because they were on a waiting list. We had initiated a school-based dental plan, Mr. Speaker. We had no deterrent fees on prescription drugs. What do you got now? What do you got now? Well you got waiting lists up to 10,000 in hospitals and the cancer clinic. We have a scuttled school-based dental plan. We have deterrent fees on prescription drugs, and we have understaffed hospitals, nursing homes, and

public health care programs.

Now the government knows it's in trouble on this, Mr. Speaker, so they moved a few paragraphs in their throne speech and they put it up on top in their throne speech.

We know they were in trouble also because they tried something else. They tried to recoup their losses by administering . . . by setting up what they call the plastic cards — a little administrative move, plastic cards. I say plastic cards represent plastic policies of a plastic government.

They tried something else to divert the pressure. They set up a task force with credible people on it. And do you know what's happened? They thought it was going to take off the heat, but the task force has heard up to 500 briefs, Mr. Speaker. Now that's heat; that's heat. That would never have happened, Mr. Speaker, if they hadn't have got into the cut-backs in health like they did with the cut-backs in education in the first place.

Well, Mr. Speaker, people in the province have identified two areas, two major areas of problems in health and education. And the government, I think, has identified those areas as problems as well, and now they're trying to rediscover some solutions.

But the public is very dismayed, Mr. Speaker, because they wonder, what's happened? He says: our taxes haven't really been going down; our services have been going down; the taxes have been going up. Everybody that's filled out their income tax knows that their taxes have been going up. Services have been going down. And at the same time they know that we have a massive, massive debt.

Mr. Speaker, not only does a person know, individually, when he's filling out his income tax right now, that his taxes have gone down . . . have gone up, but if you take a look at the statistics of what has happened over the last three years, it bears that out. Has the province — the question here that has been asked of me — has the province really gone into that kind of a financial tail-spin that they don't have any money coming in?

The individual income tax has gone from \$612 million in 1982-83 to \$831 million. That is, the province has collected that much more in those years — it's gone from 612 to 709 to 714, up to 752 and then to 831. There were one or two years there where it went down briefly. This is the record of the province's own statistics. The revenue collected from individuals in this province has always been rising.

What about sales tax? Remember, these are the people that promised that they were going to decrease the sales tax — by 10 per cent, I believe. Now what's happened? Well look at how much revenue have they collected: 1982-83, 330 million. What about the year after that? Up to 359. What about the year after that? Up to 372. What about the year after that? 383, then 386, then 467, and then the last year, 476 — 476 million. That's an average of \$476 per person here in this province.

Well in total between the two of those, from the years

'82-83 when they took over government until the last year, they've increased our personal and our sales tax from every individual by \$402 per person — \$402 per person. That's at the same time that we have pressure on health and on education.

And you might wonder, Mr. Speaker, what's happened to the property taxes in that time. Have the property taxes gone up or down or stayed constant? You take any home, take an average three-bedroom bungalow home in the town, say, of Yorkton. Property taxes in the year 1981, on the average, were \$858. By 1987 they've gone up to \$1,158. That's an increase of 250 — pardon me, that's an increase of \$550 after you add the loss of the property improvement grant of \$250. So we have evidence — hard, cold facts — on top of our gut response and our gut feelings that taxes have gone up, while services have gone down and debt has been massively accumulating.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there has been no relief in this Speech from the Throne. There's been no relief promised in the Speech from the Throne. What we have is problems, problems, problems without solutions.

You know, Mr. Speaker, as I close, I want to mention that if you go out into the rural part of the province, or if you go to any city in Saskatchewan and you ask people what they want — you know, what their aspirations are, you'll find that it's not that difficult to assess; it's fairly simple. What they tell you is they want nutritious food on the table and a solid roof over their head. They want quality education, health services for all. They want a clean environment for the future. They want to live in a country where there's freedom of expression, of association, and the right to practise a religion of one's choice. They want a country where people are motivated by the desire to live in peace and in harmony. And they want a stable economy where all people can work to earn a decent living and end up with a dollar in their pocket.

And that's what motivates me, Mr. Speaker, is when I hear those kind of comments coming from the people of the province of Saskatchewan. And that's what motivates me to represent my constituency and the people across the province, to work hard and to elect the member of Riversdale as the next premier for Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to rise to speak in this throne speech debate.

I would, first of all, like to congratulate the new Lieutenant Governor for her speech to the throne. And I believe that she did an admirable job of presenting that speech. I want to also congratulate our Lieutenant Governor on the way that she has gone out to meet schoolchildren around our province and the warm manner in which she meets and discusses issues with young people. She's doing a tremendous job. I want to congratulate her for that.

I would also like to congratulate the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. Now this is our newest member

of the legislature, the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and I want to congratulate him on the fine method in which he handled himself in the House and the content of the speech reply that he gave.

I would also like to congratulate the member from Yorkton for his seconding motion.

Before I go into my main comments, I want to respond just a little to the electoral boundaries issue that was raised by the member for Prince Albert. Mr. Speaker, the member there is trying to raise the idea that to not have exactly the same number of people in each constituency is something new. And I want to assure him that that's a fairly old tradition in this province that rural ridings have for a long time had somewhat less in numbers than the city ridings.

Just to give you an example of the numbers that I'm speaking of, in my particular riding I have approximately 8,800 voters. But if you were to go to the riding of the member for Saskatoon Mayfair, you would find that he had almost double that number.

(1530)

So I think the idea of a weighted system for rural versus urban has been in existence for a long period of time.

The report from the Electoral Boundaries Commission is just tabled before this House, and I'm sure that we will have many opportunities to talk about it in the near future.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to touch very briefly on some of the environmental issues that I see happening throughout our province. People throughout Saskatchewan and Canada are placing more emphasis on the environment, and recent polls show that almost one in four Canadians now feel that environment is the most pressing issue facing the country. That's up dramatically from 1987 when only 3 per cent believed environment was the most serious concern.

It's interesting to note that members opposite are finally beginning to recognize that there are environmental issues in our province. This is in marked contrast to their so-called concern, or lack of it, when they were government. Their lack of environmental consideration . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, point of order. I sit right behind the member for Rosetown and I can't hear for the noise opposite. Could you . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, please. Order. We had a little fun, but I think maybe it's time to settle down.

An Hon. Member: — No, it's not fun, what you were doing. That's not fun.

The Deputy Speaker: — Well, all right. We will have a little order.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Before I was interrupted I was

speaking about the lack of concern that the members opposite had for environment at the time that they were in . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I would ask the members opposite to show a little decorum, please.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was remarking to the members opposite that during the time when they were in government they showed very little environmental concern for the things that were happening in our province. The lack of that consideration, I think, showed very clearly when in 1976 the federal Pioneer had a very major spill of PCB contaminated oil on a site here in Regina. Those members, as a government, covered that spill up and told no one until it was released or found out by the media in 1978.

The spill in 1976 involved some 21,000 litres of PCB contaminated oil. In our day and age, as we find PCB contaminated spills, we clean them up. At that time, what did they do? And let me read to you a report that was listed in the *Leader-Post* at that time. It says:

More than two years passed before civic officials were informed of a potentially dangerous chemical spill within the Regina city limits, Mayor Henry Baker confirmed yesterday. Baker, a member of the Emergency Measures Organization, which would have been responsible for action had there been immediate injury or danger, said civic officials, including himself, police, and fire department officials only heard of the incident at the beginning of this week, and only then through the media. He described the situation as an unfortunate affair.

Let's remind the people of Saskatchewan that Henry Baker was an NDP MLA at that time. And in the fall of 1978, there was widespread public concern over the possible contamination by PCBs of ground water in Regina from that particular spill. And what was the response from the former NDP government? They covered it up, and they made the cover-up permanent when they paved the surface of the contaminated area with asphalt. That was the former administration's response, but our government's commitment to the environment is clear: it is protection, and we back up our words with actions.

Our government not only talks about protecting the environment but also puts action to our words. PCBs were covered up by the former government, but this administration, under the leadership of our Premier, has begun to process PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyl) by running them through a process here in Regina that takes the PCBs out of the oil and has actually put those products back into service, saving a considerable number of dollars for SaskPower corporation and also taking away the contaminated product. Some 2 million litres have been processed since 1985.

As well, our government has structured a new site for the collection of all PCBs in this province. That site was built near the Boundary dam station, and at this point in time,

SaskPower is busily moving those PCB-contaminated materials and storing them in a very safe site in our province.

Flammable or easily ignitable products will not be accepted for storage. However, high level material such as Askarel transformers and capacitors and PCB lamp ballasts can be stored there.

Industries will not be able to simply show up at the gate without notice. All transportation to the site must be co-ordinated, scheduled, and on registered carriers, and must follow transportation of dangerous goods guide-lines.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that that places this province out in front of any province in Canada for a capable method of handling PCB-contaminated materials. We hope that in the very near future we will have a chemical process that can be used to decontaminate all of the materials that we're putting into storage.

Another example of the way that the former administration handled environmental matters — NEWCOR, a mine that mined gold in the area near Douglas Lake and the community of Creighton. In the late 1950s and early '60s, this gold refining operation existed on the shores of Douglas Lake near Creighton. This process resulted in the production of a waste containing arsenic trioxide. Approximately 20 tons of arsenic trioxide was produced and then stored on the site in a concrete vault, which was only some 150 feet from the shores of Douglas Lake. Now this is fairly important information, because Douglas Lake is the source of drinking water for the town of Creighton, and I'm sure that the community of Creighton was facing significant concern over the storage of that product. And yet over about a 30-year period, in which the members opposite were government for a good portion of that time, not one thing was done.

The mines safety branch of the Department of Environment realized the seriousness of this situation. In the summer of 1987 I visited the site, and after seeing the condition of the vault that the product was stored in, and having had the water tested in the lake shore very near to that site, we found that the contamination was serious, so we ordered the site cleaned up. Now that product was in a concrete vault that was cracking, and in barrels that had almost decomposed, and indeed some of the barrels had been buried in the ground and were not even in the vault, and we found buried contamination within 40 feet of the edge of that lake.

I mention this point to show that this government does take concern over environmental matters and takes action. This site was cleaned up, and today the community of Creighton has clean water for their use. I believe that that move is a good move by our government, and one that shows concern for the people and for the environment in the area.

Another area that our department has been involved in that had been neglected by the former administration, we had a number of abandoned mines in the province and these abandoned mines were let go; nothing was done.

Many of them were very hazardous to the people living in the areas. As most of you realize, a number of these mines were in southern Saskatchewan in the coal mining area. Many of them have been there for probably 70 or 80 years. Loss of life near Estevan sparked considerable interest in what the future should be for abandoned mines. Our government has established a program and put in place people, and we have identified, over the past summer, approximately 500 mines that have been abandoned, and six very serious tailings deposits in northern Saskatchewan.

The status of many of these mines is still being assessed, but the most dangerous of the sites have been assessed, and refilling of many of these abandoned mines has already occurred. Last summer we completed the filling of 22 mine sites, and nine local contractors were used for the work. We have gone on to identify a number of the other mines, and refilling of mines and making these areas safe for people to live in is occurring, and will continue to occur over the next few months.

We've worked very close with local governments and people in the wildlife federation who have been involved in hunting and walking through much of that part of the country. Each of those groups have provided valuable input to the the department, and that input has enabled us to identify the most serious sites and to proceed to clean them up.

There are many pressing issues that face environment in our province today and will continue to in the future. Many industries and many individuals are concerned about the future environmental needs of our province. Some of the concerns that they raise are: depletion of the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect, and other problems of air pollution.

As elected representatives we need to continue to address these issues so that our environment remains clean and the economy of our province is strong. We need to ensure that the environment is protected, that we have good quality water for our people, that our land remains productive, that development and consumption of our natural resources continues in a way that minimizes the impact on our environment. Integrating the environment and economical development will be a bigger challenge for governments and for industry.

The environment is something that we should not fear. Our challenge is clear: to be leaders in meshing development with a clean environment. Consequently, I support the goals of sustainable economic development defined in the report of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy as development which ensures that the utilization of resources and environment today does not damage prospects for their use by future generations.

How has our government responded to protecting Saskatchewan's environment? Let me give you some examples. This year our government has put in place regulations that deal with hazardous substances. The focus of the new regulations is prevention. These preventative measures include the registration of storage facilities, new standards for new facilities, the upgrading

of existing facilities within five years, inventory control, and the preparation of an environmental emergency response plan. We also intend to initiate programs to address the management of all hazardous substances at the various types of storage facilities, including underground as well as above ground tank systems.

(1545)

In the near future we will be developing appropriate standards for the construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of these facilities. Our government takes serious our responsibility to deal with toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes, and we will continue to work at providing a good quality of life through environmental protection.

Last year we passed The Clean Air Act, which is an item of interest to the members of this Assembly, and I would like to take a few minutes to briefly outline some of the highlights of the new Act to show the substantial improvements in the protection of air quality in Saskatchewan from the former administration to the present government.

All industrial sources, incinerators, and fuel-burning equipment will require a permit under The Clean Air Act. Unless a specific exemption has been granted, this is the major change contained in the new legislation. No longer will sources that were operational prior to 1975 be automatically exempted. The new Act contains a listing of the typical conditions which must be included in any permit. We expect that this will end the confusion and disagreements over permit conditions which have occurred in the past.

The normal permit term will be five years as opposed to the one-year term that is used at present. This change came about at the request of our clients who felt that one-year terms did not provide the assurance and security necessary to allow them to enter into long-term sales contracts. Details of emergency situations must be provided within seven days, and applications for any permit amendments must be submitted within 14 days.

The spill control regulations and the clean air regulations contain additional reporting requirements with respect to emergency or accidental releases. If an air pollution problem occurs, the director of the air and land protection branch may issue an order requiring the source to limit the discharge, install additional control equipment, measure or monitor the air contaminant, investigate the effects, and provide reports to the director. This is the other major change in the new Act. The penalties for violation of the new Act or regulations have been increased to a maximum of \$50,000 for corporations and \$1,000 for individuals.

Through legislation such as this, the new Clean Air Act, our government intends to better control air emissions from industrial plants in the province and to protect against pollutants which contribute to acid rain.

We have also come out in support of the federal government's initiative to protect the earth's ozone layer, and we support the elimination of chlorofluorocarbons,

that is CFCs, within the next 10 years.

Recently the Government of Ontario made a major announcement that they were going to rule out the use of CFCs prior to that 10-year period, and I hope that that process will be successful for the Ontario government. However, I think each one of us must be aware that in order to rule out chlorofluorocarbons, we also have to have a product to take their place. Most of us realize that industry cannot respond instant, but can respond if given a responsible time frame, and I think 10 years is that responsible time frame.

In 1986 the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers appointed a task force to follow up the work of the World Commission on Environment and Development. This National Task Force on Environment and the Economy presented its report to the council at our 1987 fall council meeting. This report, which subsequently was presented by Canada to the United Nations General Assembly, has been very well received, nationally and internationally.

Environmental protection is everyone's business. The National Task Force on Environment and the Economy directed recommendations to government, industry, business, educators, and the public. The task force recommended that each jurisdiction in Canada form a round table to bring together government, industry, and non-government leaders. The purpose of this group is to candidly discuss environment- and economy-related issues and to make recommendations. Our government is committed to forming a round table, and the names of the individual members will be announced very soon.

The task force also recommended that each province and territory should have a conservation strategy in place by 1992. The purpose of such plan is to ensure that our renewable resource base is sustained for future use to ensure we preserve genetic diversity and maintain essential ecological processes and life support systems.

Many organizations, businesses and governments have programs currently aimed at conservation. The conservation strategy will co-ordinate these programs and provide a longer-term goal. One program which provides an excellent beginning to a conservation strategy is the Prairies Conservation Action Plan. This plan was recently endorsed by the three prairie provinces. Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta have all made commitments to work with the World Wildlife Fund and other conservation organizations to conserve and improve prairie habitat.

Another recommendation of the task force was that the minister must ensure that they are responsible and accountable for the environmental and economic consequences of their policies, legislation and programs. To this end, our government recently formed a cabinet committee on environment. This committee is directed with the task of developing and integrating environmental strategy. Our intent is to ensure that government programs do not work at cross purposes and to ensure that the environment is considered in planning and development actions.

Now I would like to switch hats and speak a little about the Sask Water role that I carry. And as minister responsible for Sask Water Corporation, over the past two and a half years I have seen some very dry conditions around the province. Last year's drought not only seriously affected my farm, but also the crops of many farmers in my constituency. It not only covered the Rosetown-Elrose area but devastated most of southern and central Saskatchewan.

Our government responded to the plight of farmers, ranchers and communities by introducing an enhanced drought relief program last year. In 1988 we provided assistance of nearly \$10 million to help drought-proof the province, and Saskatchewan people were pleased with this helping hand. This year we expect to provide similar levels of assistance, which will make the total close to \$20 million over a two-year period. Last year Sask Water provided grants for 1,246 test holes, 2,855 individual wells, 29 community wells, and 4,169 dug-outs and small storage reservoirs.

Through rental of government and private equipment, farmers pumped a record 1,981 dug-outs. In addition, nearly 150 drought-related applications were also handled under the municipal water assistance program.

Earlier this year our government extended the enhanced drought assistance program. The deadline for applications is March 31. After that date, Sask Water's drought assistance programs will return to their previous levels. I should point out that once applicants receive written approval to proceed, they'll have until October 1, 1989, to complete the work and submit receipts. This program extension will mean that many more people and communities will benefit from our enhanced assistance.

I am also encouraged to see that many communities are undertaking public education programs on wise water use and conservation. Water is one of our most valuable natural resources, and such programs help people realize the important role that they can play in water management and conservation.

Our government is committed to the concept of water management, whether it be in the form of long-term water storage projects, such as Gardiner dam and Lake Diefenbaker dam, or through the \$100 million Canada-Saskatchewan irrigation agreement.

The first project centred in the Luck Lake area will be pumping water for the first time this spring. A similar state of the irrigation project at Riverhurst is under construction and will be serving farmers in that region in May of 1990. Investigations around Lake Diefenbaker have identified five more projects. If these seven projects were all developed, the total number of acres under irrigation in that area would be about 200,000.

To date, Sask Water has signed commitment letters from farmers for 71,000 acres. The interest in irrigation is very high indeed. I believe the Premier must be commended for his vision and drive in making this significant irrigation agreement a reality.

Our government is also very concerned about soil and

water conservation. Careful consideration of soil conditions and water use efficiency should result in economically and environmentally sustainable irrigation projects.

One of the reasons that our government has been promoting irrigation development is for agricultural and economic diversification. We've already seen a number of companies begin to expand or, as a result of this agreement, to indeed build new facilities. For example, a group of investors in Delisle are working to develop a \$1.6 million salad processing plant. The Delsa foods limited of Delisle will use potatoes and other vegetables from irrigated farm production to develop and prepare salads for the western Canada market. Within five years it is estimated that the plant will require the production of 500 acres of vegetables to meet its quota.

Our irrigation program has helped two Lake Diefenbaker area firms expand to process irrigation crops. Elbow cubes and feed limited have purchased portable alfalfa cubing equipment in order to produce alfalfa cubes for both the local and export markets. Keg Farms of Outlook has increased the capacity of its seed cleaning and will encourage the production of speciality crops such as dry beans. These two locally owned companies will process production from approximately 2,500 irrigated acres each year.

Saskatoon Fresh Pack Potatoes Ltd. are working towards \$2.4 million expansion of their facility and equipment to increase production of their current product lines, as well as adding new product items. This expansion will result in the company requiring an estimated 5,000 additional acres of potatoes and other vegetables by the year 1992. As a result of these plans, the company can now complete far more trade and extend their product export into the United States market.

Another Saskatoon company, Intercontinental Packers, has begun construction of an \$8 million modernization of its beef processing facilities. The modernization will double the plant's kill and chill capacity to 5,200 cattle per week.

Meanwhile, Canada Packers is expanding its Moose Jaw beef processing plant. The \$1.3 million expansion will also increase its capacity to 5,000 cattle per week. Canada Packers is expanding its facilities to handle the increased number of slaughtered cattle produced by the use of irrigation forage products. The increased capacity of the two packing plants will lend to more production, forage crops, and other low cost, irrigation-grown cattle feed.

(1600)

As part of our irrigation initiative, Canon Inc. has decided to build a hyprescon pipe plant near Saskatoon. The Canadian prairies market for this kind of pipe is expected to grow substantially over the next few years as demand for irrigated land increases. The plant, which will produce a locally manufactured product, is now under construction and will begin operating later this spring.

I would be remiss if I did not spend a few minutes talking

about the constituency that I represent, and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Rosetown-Elrose electorate for electing me for the third time to this legislature.

The constituency has seen a number of new things happening in the past year, and I think that I would like to recognize some of those. Health care has always been extremely important in my constituency and indeed across the province. This has been reflected in the many ways that our government has responded to the needs in my constituency in the past few years.

This past year we had a sod turning for a new Golden Years Lodge in Elrose. This is about a \$2.1 million project. It will provide 28 replacement beds and two new beds, for a total of 30 beds in Elrose special care home.

I'm also very proud of the \$3 million Kyle-White Bear integrated facility that is just being completed and will soon be ready for opening. It has nine acute care beds and twelve long-term beds. Renovations are also taking place at the Mildren Union Hospital. Just very recently, I opened a small addition and upgrading to the Rosetown nursing home facility. Each one of these changes provide essential health care for the seniors in my constituency, and I'm very pleased for that.

A new and rich housing complex that provides six senior citizen units in the town of Beechy was opened late in the fall. This also is providing accommodation that allows seniors to stay in their home community and to enjoy the opportunity to be close to their family and their friends.

Education is also a very important part of that constituency, and I would like to just identify a few things that have happened in education in our constituency. This year Rosetown opened a new central high school that will accommodate both divisions three and four. This new school is a state of the art school. I would say that it's a leader in its time. And I was very pleased to be at the opening of that facility, along with Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor. And Her Honour did a fine job for us that particular day, and the school very much appreciated having her in their midst.

We also had very extensive renovations to the Kyle Composite High School last year. That school was getting older; many of the facilities were quite aged and needed replacing. So the school has been upgraded to today's standards and is providing good service in that community.

In conclusion, I am very pleased that our government has, over the past few years, had a good record in many areas of government, particularly in the health care field, the agriculture field, education, environment, water management, drought relief, rural development, and the overall trends of our government to develop a strong economic base in our province.

It's interesting that this past year is the first time in the history of this province that the industrial sector has surpassed the agricultural sector for generating jobs and for generating income. I think it's something to say for the development that our government has taken as very

serious for our province to bring us up into the 20th century level, as a province that doesn't depend only on agriculture, but rather places industry and agriculture as two that can work very closely together.

Once again I want to commend the Premier for putting together such a forward-looking and commonsense throne speech. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be very pleased to vote against the amendment and to be voting in favour of the main motion. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to reply in the address from the throne speech. I welcome it for a number of reasons. First of all, it gives me an opportunity to explain to the people of this province something that I think most of them already know — is how this government operates.

But before I do that, I would like to join with other members in welcoming the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I hope his short stay with us will be enjoyed by him. Kind of feel sorry for the member a little bit, because I think if he had any credibility before he got elected, it's been just a few short weeks now, and I'm sure that credibility has already gone downhill, just because we have a government and a Premier of this province who does not tell the people the truth all the time, and they can't trust him. And now the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg is another member in the wolf pack.

I would just say that he should enjoy his short stay here because I believe it will be a short stay, because I would be willing to bet that he won't be back for a second time.

And I say that for one reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I spent a little bit of time down in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and something that I was hearing down there really made me feel that there was something wrong with the whole process that we're in. That was, I was on the doorsteps of people who were telling me, well I wouldn't normally vote Tory, I wouldn't normally vote Tory, but I've seen this government operate. I've seen how they display their patronage. I see how they reward people. I hear how they . . . in terms of the federal government saying, you know, if you don't vote for us, you're going to be left out. And this is what these people were saying.

And I thought to myself, well, shouldn't these people be saying, we're going to select the best candidate who will do the best job to represent the farmers, the working people, the professional people in that community?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — That's what they should have been making their decision on, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But instead they were making a decision based on the message they were getting from this government, and that is the only way they were going to get anything was to vote Tory.

I think that's brought the democratic system to its lowest

degree, when you're not making a decision based on the quality of someone who can work, but making a decision based on a government who rewards people for doing something for them. That should not be a part of the democratic structure in this province or any other place in the world, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So anyway, I would just . . . I do feel sorry for the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, because he didn't know probably what he was getting into, but I'm sure he does now, and hopefully some day he'll realize the ills of his ways.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also would like to talk for a minute about my own constituency of Humboldt. On behalf of my constituents, I would like to say a couple of words with respect to something like the enriched housing program in Bruno that was announced a week before the election in 1986, and ever since then we've been trying to get another commitment out of the government saying that the promise they made would be kept. But here we are in 1989 and we still see nothing happening.

After repeated attempts by the people, by myself, to get the government to deliver on a promise, their word, they will not do it. So I will just hope that this throne speech leading up to a budget speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will . . . the government will in there find the heart, find the courage maybe, to keep their promises.

Also I'd like just to mention briefly the situation in Humboldt where the SaskPower service crew was removed. In a town of 5,000 people, 5,000 people, when this government removes the service crew that fixes accidents or power outages in Humboldt, now they have to come out of Saskatoon. And can you imagine this winter, when it's 40 below, when there's a wind and the snow blowing and there's a power outage in the town of Humboldt in the middle of the night, can you imagine how long it will take them to notify that Saskatoon office to get somebody out there?

That's a real step to the future, simply because they can't manage, simply because they do not keep in mind the needs of the people, simply because they cannot distribute the wealth of this province to benefit those ordinary working people in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the leader of the party across the way, the Premier of this province, has a big job ahead of him. That job is to try to recapture the imagination of the people of this province, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he has lost it. And just for a moment I would just like to make a little comparison between the leader on the government side of the House and the leader on the opposition side of the House.

On this side of the House we have a man, a leader who is devoted to trying to get this government to work towards keeping people healthy, keeping people educated, keeping people in their jobs and on their farms, keeping people in the province.

He has travelled thousands of miles around this province, meeting with anybody that wanted to meet, meeting at every opportunity with clubs and business organizations

and working people, in their kitchens, addressing the real issues, the real issues being how do we keep this economy . . . make this economy of Saskatchewan come back up to a level where we can operate and function without having to worry about the taxes going up, our neighbours leaving, our farms being foreclosed upon. That's the leader we have at this side of the House.

Compared to a Premier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who I get complaints about from people saying, look we can't meet the Premier, we can't get access to him. A Premier who is not listening to the people. If you don't have access to them you're not listening to them. A Premier who, when the crucial issues in this province come up, is usually off globe-trotting somewhere around the world. A leader on the government side who says, we are working for the people of the province, and when the serious issue comes up, he's gone. That's hypocrisy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the ultimate bit of hypocrisy is what the leader of the government does when he gets in a jam.

The leader of this side of the House tries to confront the issues. For example, the foreclosure issue. Major problem. Forecasting almost 2,000 farm foreclosures in Saskatchewan this year; 3,000 in the two years previous. And we on this side of the House, we try to get the Premier of this province to say, whoa, we don't want the people to leave the farms. We try to address the issue and give suggestions of stopping the foreclosures.

We address the issue of getting income out to the farmers so that they won't be foreclosed upon. We address the issue of a predictable program. We address the issue of debt and drought and wheat board and all other aspects of agriculture.

But what's the response? And the way this legislature should work, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we try to encourage the government to make the best possible decision for the people of this province. And that's what the leader on this side is trying to do with the rest of these members.

But what's the response? The Premier who says he's working for the people of this province responds by character assassination; responds by not even attempting to address the issue, but goes off on a wild raid somewhere about the person.

(1615)

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think there's one reason for this. The Premier of this province will not address the issues as presented by this side of the House. Question period after question period, questions aren't answered. But why is he doing this? Why is he not talking about the issue? He's not talking about the issue, Mr. Speaker, as every member or nearly every member on that side of the House did not address the issues, especially in agriculture, in any one of their speeches. They go around the edge.

But the Premier of this province is not addressing the issue because he has one purpose in mind. That's to stop the Leader of the Opposition from becoming government. What a selfish motive for a Premier of the province to cast

aside all the problems of this province, the problems of debt in agriculture, and working people leaving this province, to cast all that aside, not address it, for his own personal gain — for personal political gain. And that's why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this attempt by this Premier and this government to slander the leader on this side of the House will not work, because the people understand.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — The people understand what he's trying to do — not address the issue; for trying to attack other people for his own political gain.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this throne speech I saw very little new. All the old worn out ideas, no economic strategy for recovery in this province, nobody addressing the issues.

I come back to this just for one second. It amazes me that we have a number of rural members on that side of the House. Did they talk about the drought program? Did they explain to their constituents in this throne speech why the drought program was late? Did they explain to their constituents when they got up why they didn't stand up for them when western grain stabilization was cut out from under them?

Did they get up in their place and tell their constituents why they weren't standing up and defending the Canadian Wheat Board when it's being driven out of this country? Did they stand up in their place and give their economic plan for debt restructuring? Did they stand up in their place and give a speech about how they were going to stabilize the industry by having predictable programs to provide economic stability? Not a word, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And why won't they do that? Why won't they address the issues at hand? I say because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have no ideas. They are absolutely void of ideas.

Then there's the opposite; maybe they do have an idea. Maybe they have all decided that the Premier of this province, who in days gone by had a plan to reduce the number of farmers in this province, thereby reducing the population of this province, they have fallen in line to that hypocritical plan. And I say that to the members opposite, that is not what their job is. Their job is to address the issues on behalf of their constituents, and very few did it.

Then, Mr. Speaker, they are talking to fewer and fewer people all the time as we are on this side. The out-migration in this province has reached epidemic proportions. In an epidemic, in any epidemic you have to address the problem in very crucial manners with good ideas, to stop the epidemic. But there's nothing happening from this government.

We have young people leaving this province. We have urban families leaving this province; we have rural families leaving this province. And they're all leaving behind friends and families — maybe, unless they've gone ahead of them.

I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those people who are

leaving this province don't believe the Premier of this province. They don't believe him when he says he's working for them; he's working to create employment; he's working to keep health care; he's working to stop the foreclosure of farms. They don't believe him.

And as was said in this House earlier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will predict many of those people will come back to this province when this Premier has the courage to call an election, and work their heart out to beat him. I know they'll do that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — It reminds me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was just thinking about the whole thing of people leaving the province in droves, the farmers losing their land, and foreclosure actions — farmers having to lose their land. And then I hear an announcement from the Premier saying that we're going to exterminate or drive all the rats out of this province. And I would say, that program worked so well on the ordinary people and the farmers of this province — driving them out — that it's just extending it to the rats, and it'll probably work well there. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, don't trust the word of the Premier. They don't trust the word of the Premier.

We have a situation where patronage is running rampant. Nearly every defeated Tory candidate is now working for the government. Can you feature it? People rejected them, but the Tory government took them back in. And we got all these people running around.

This reminds me of a saying once, and that's that the monkeys are in charge of the banana plantation. And that's what we have here. You can't get rid of them; they're eating all the bananas themselves; and we got people leaving the province. Isn't that a problem to have in a province like Saskatchewan where we have so many resources, whether that it be mineral or human; in the province of Saskatchewan where we built up an economy and a society that treats people well, that ensures they have good health care, that ensures they have good education. And the monkeys in charge of the banana patch are letting it go, because they're keeping it all for themselves, and that's the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn now to some of the issues, the serious issues that are facing the people of this province, especially as it relates to agriculture.

The drought program. The drought program in Saskatchewan came to Saskatchewan late, as we know, because Manitoba and Alberta got it ahead of us. This Premier of this province says, in the by-election of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, the green feed program participants would not be affected. And what do we see on the form when the drought forms come out? Green feed program participants, people who participate in the green feed program — the levels of money they get will be reduced. Now there's a word for that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know I can't say it here. But here again, the people can't trust the word of the Premier of this province.

All the people are asking out there, they're just saying to

me when I talk to farmers, just tell me what I'm going to get. If I'm going to get nothing, then tell me I'm going to get nothing. If I'm going to get something, then tell me what I'm going to get because I have to budget. I have to operate and make my operation work. I have to tell my banker and my suppliers what I can pay them. But just tell me — and they're begging out there — just tell me what I'm going to get, and then I know how to operate my farm.

But no. Is that what the Premier of this province stands up and says in this House? That he's putting pressure on Brian Mulroney to make sure that this drought program is a clear, concise, predictable program providing stability for the rural communities? No, he does not do that. In fact, the Premier, in 1985 was saying that we're going to have a drought program in place so that we'll never be affected financially by another drought. And it was said in Ottawa. And did we see that? No. Because you can't trust the word of the Premier of this province.

The drought program where people were promised it in a federal election. That's the Tory policy — how do we buy them this time? Promised it in the federal election of last year; said it was going to be out in early January. And believe it or not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I called down to Ottawa early in January to find out some of the details of the drought program, you could phone any one of a number of numbers and the poor people on the other end of that program had no idea what was going on.

So they make an announcement during election, with no plan. Build up the expectations of the people saying that they can make plans, that there's money coming and they can tell their banker there's money coming, they can tell their suppliers there's money coming and it'll be coming in January. And then January rolls around and there's no money and the banker's knocking on the door saying, when's your money coming? Well I don't know. February rolls around and the suppliers are writing letters saying, when can I expect my money? Farmer says, I don't know. March rolls around, and lo and behold, we get some forms. Four or five months after the promise was made — a promise that said people, you're going to be getting something.

And I say again, all the farmers of this province want to know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is give me the rules of the program. Give me the formula. I can work it out. Let me know what I should expect.

But no, the Premier of this province doesn't stand up for the farmers out in rural Saskatchewan. He doesn't push Ottawa to have a good, concise, predictable stability program; doesn't push Ottawa to restructure debt; doesn't push Ottawa to stop the erosion of the Canadian Wheat Board. When the Canadian Wheat Board announcement was made, I believe the Premier was off on his Eastern business trip — his Eastern holiday on the Oriental Express. I would venture to guess, and it's just a guess, but I would venture to guess that the Premier of this province knew the decision before he left, knew the decision before he left.

I had the opportunity of attending some Canadian Wheat Board country meetings and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those country meetings were well attended because the people

went there for a purpose. People went there because they could see what was happening. Did they have leadership from the Premier of this province? Did they have the Premier of this province standing up to Ottawa and say, don't erode the wheat board? No, the Premier of this province was saying, it's only 1 per cent of the market; it's insignificant.

The Premier of this province was agreeing with the federal government saying it was okay to erode the Canadian Wheat Board, all the while saying, I'm a supporter of the Canadian Wheat Board, I'm a supporter of the Canadian Wheat Board — but we don't trust the word of the Premier of this province.

At those country meetings, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . I have a list of them, I'd just like to read them off. In Meadow Lake, there was approximately 80 people. And at all these meetings, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at all these meetings there was a motion to keep oats under the wheat board. And the motions varied: to keep oats under the wheat board; add canola to the wheat board. But the bottom line was, don't erode the Canadian Wheat Board — keep it. We want it, we need it. That's the message the Premier of this province should be telling Ottawa. But the people took over when the Premier fell down.

Meadow Lake, 80 people. Six supported the Premier of this province and the Prime Minister of this country — six out of 80.

In Perdue, 180 people. And there in Perdue 12 people agreed with the Premier of this province.

And in Kerrobert, 170 people were attending the meeting. The meeting had the same motions supporting the Canadian Wheat Board, and out of those 170, 10 people agreed with the Premier of this province that the wheat board should go.

And in Porcupine Plain there were 120 people, and in Porcupine Plain five people agreed with the Premier of this province that the wheat board should be eroded and let go.

In Melville, 170 people, and three people agreed with the Premier of this province and this government over here that the wheat board should go.

Wadena, 120 people approximately, and two people agreed with the Premier of this province and this government opposite.

Wapella, 130 people, and six people agreed with the Premier of this province and the government opposite that the wheat board should go.

Weyburn, 180 people, and there 25 people agreed with the Premier of this province.

Herbert, 110 people at the meeting; six people agreed with the Premier of this province.

And in Wakaw there were 300 people out, 300 people fighting to save the wheat board, and 15 agreed with the Premier of this province that the wheat board should be

let go and deteriorated.

(1630)

In all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you talk about a good poll. Approximately 1,560 people came out to wheat board meetings to express their concern about the deterioration of the Canadian Wheat Board. And out of those 1,560 people, approximately 60 of them agreed with the Premier of this province that the wheat board should go.

You talk about a poll, opinion poll, but whose side is the Premier of this province on? He's on the side of the multinational grain company; he's on the side of the U.S. government pushing free trade, trying to get rid of the wheat board, when the majority of the people at these meetings and, I say, the majority of the people of this province say: Mr. Premier, we don't trust your word when we see how you act.

And I think that message will come through loud and clear in the next election, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You can even go into Alberta and Manitoba. And this issue, this issue goes beyond political lines. It's an issue at the heart of the people, because it's an institution that has created a form of stability for the people of this province that they could rely on.

They could predict that they were going to be marketing their grain in an orderly fashion. They could predict that, as shown last year with a study done in the comparison between the Canadian Wheat Board and the Minneapolis Grain Exchange, that oats itself consistently sold higher under the Canadian Wheat Board. And this Premier wants it to go, when taking oats out from under the control of the wheat board means that there's going to be lower prices in the pockets of the farmers. And he wants it to go. What type of a Premier would want that when the people of this province are already in hard, tough economic times.

But in Alberta and Manitoba it was overwhelming support for the Canadian Wheat Board — overwhelming support. And where's the Premier of Saskatchewan? He's tucked right in under the wing of Brian Mulroney and Charlie Mayer saying, okay guys, let's go, let's destroy this thing because then we can get our multinational grain traders in here, and they put funds into our campaigns, and that way we can make sure that we have enough money to advertise and get elected. That's where the Premier of this province is — under the wing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, another important issue — and I'm just touching on these briefly because there's much more that could be said about this. Another important issue was the one of western grain stabilization. I'll just speak for a moment on this.

An Hon. Member: — Is that all you can speak on it . . .

Mr. Upshall: — No, I could speak on it for much longer than that, but in the time constraints, I'll only speak for a moment.

The issue here was the federal government set the rules, the federal government set the rules and legislation, then

they changed the rules and legislation. They paid farmers at \$12.12 for every dollar contributed, and right on the form — here's the thing — right on the form it says: you will be paid proportionately to every dollar you contribute to the program. But the legislation changed in the middle of last year. They increased the percentage rate from one to four that the farmers contributed, but did they pay the farmers on that 4 per cent rate? Did the government opposite stand up, did the Premier of this province stand up to Ottawa and say, look, you said that you were going to be paid on every dollar contributed under this program and you were only paid on one-quarter of that? Is that the type of leader that we need in this province? No, I say it is not.

And then when we ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I try to ask the Premier and try to ask the federal government, where is the — this is just before the last federal election — where is the final payment from the wheat board? There wasn't a word said. You know why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because the Premier of this province knew there was going to be bills sent out; the Prime Minister of this country knew there was going to be bills sent out instead of cheques. So they were tight-lipped. How can anyone who now sits back and sees the process that we've gone through here ever trust the word of this Premier again? I don't think they can.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the two most urgent problems we have in this province is income — lack of income — and uncontrollable debt. We need a program, and we have promoted a program that would provide income stability, income stability by predictability. As I said, the farmers have said, let us know.

But the question I have to ask myself is, why won't — why doesn't the Premier of this province and the Prime Minister of this country — why won't they come out with a program that is stable and predictable when everyone's crying for it; not just the farmers, the small-business people in the small towns, the business people in the city who rely so much on them? And this has not just become a farm problem now, it's become a society problem.

The small-business people are suffering, the professional people are suffering, the farmers are suffering, all because the Premier of this province and the Prime Minister of this country will not give the people what they want. They want a predictable program, a program that provides income stability. They don't want to get rich off the government. All they want to know is that there's going to be a program in place so that they and their families can stay on their farms. Now they don't know that.

If you were in severe financial difficulty, Mr. Deputy Premier, every time that phone rings, let me tell you, you'd jump. It's just like a time bomb ticking away, waiting to go off. And where's the leadership, where's the compassion, where's the heart of this government and the government in Ottawa? They know they have to spend a certain amount of money, but they won't tell us when it's coming, how it's coming. They won't tell us the formula to use so that we can figure out what we're going to get so that we can tell the small-business people that, look, as soon as I get my money, you'll be getting some.

What's happening right now is we've got a little money shuffle going on, from the federal government, through the pockets of the farmers, to the banking institutions and to the Government of Saskatchewan Agricultural Credit Corporation, because they've got farmers in a position where they cannot, where they cannot take the funds that they have to disburse and put them to work for them in such a manner that they can make themselves a decent living.

On the other side, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is debt. We are in a situation now where we're almost a third world country. Third world countries' biggest problem is they have unmanageable debt. The farmers of Saskatchewan and the small-business people of Saskatchewan's biggest problem is they have unmanageable debt.

And when we know that problem is there, why doesn't the Premier of this province do something about it? Oh, he says, in his flowery speeches, we are working for the family farm and the society and the rural communities and the people, but he does nothing about it. That's why the people don't trust the word of this Premier.

We have presented solutions. The Government of Saskatchewan and the federal government hold over half of the farm debt — hold over half of the six and a half billion dollar farm debt. They can purchase money for much less than a farmer can purchase money for. They can get loans far cheaper than the farmer can, and they can disburse that money equally amongst the farmers so that they can control their debt. But no, they won't do that. Instead, farm credit corporation, instead of being the farmer's bank, the prime lender, has the highest, or one of the highest rates going.

All we need, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the farmers, all they need is to know that the debt is not going to kill them. And this government will not provide that solution. They won't have a debt restructuring program that says you're going to have a low, long-term, fixed interest rate on the amount of your debt, and if your debt is over a certain amount, then maybe we have to set part of that debt aside, turn the interest clock off on it so that you can see a light at the end of that tunnel.

This government, this Premier, refuses to do that, and he refuses to do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because he has a master plan, as I said earlier. And his master plan is to drive a number of people out of this province, drive the farmers off the land because that's his theory, that's his vision. He says we don't need these many farmers out here.

But that's not my vision, and that's not the vision of the members on this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This province was built up on farms and small business, people in communities making a healthy life-style for themselves, entertaining themselves, working hard, getting ahead. But this Premier of this province has taken that opportunity away from them because he won't provide any courage to stand up to Ottawa. He won't provide any courage to tell Ottawa that there has to be a debt restructuring program that helps these people manage their debt, or to help these people have income stability. That's what we have because he has a vision of

reducing the number of people of this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could go on. There's the issue of beef stabilization; the tripartite; the slow reaction on the drought; counting the cattle of farmers now through ACS on their livestock program; saying that every farmer's guilty of abusing the programs, so we're going to count their cows, and we're going to make them pay for it, and you're guilty until we prove you innocent. That's the type of government we have.

We have a government that gives Pocklington money to create a hog industry in Saskatchewan. Well I tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, giving Pocklington money does not create a hog industry in Saskatchewan. We have a Premier of this province who is spouting free trade, and free trade, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will take down every orderly marketing system we have in this country.

Standing up for people, families, society — what hypocrisy! That's why the people of this province don't trust the word of this Premier.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have talked briefly about a number of issues that are real issues, not like the members opposite or their Premier who will not address the real issues because they have no ideas; because they can't address them because . . . that's not their vision. And in order to achieve their vision they won't address these problems.

I would just like to say now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I will be supporting this amendment, and there is no way in this world that I could support a motion by this government because of the hypocrisy, because of the mistrust, because of their blatant mismanagement, because of their patronage. I could not do that. And I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a lot of support from the people of this province. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I'd like to start by sending out my sincere congratulations to our new Lieutenant Governor here in the province of Saskatchewan and to say to all the people out there in our TV land that, whether they realize it or not, basically this is an historic event for Saskatchewan. It's an historic event in the way that Her Honour is the first lady that's ever held that position here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this appointment of Her Honour definitely has a full meaning to the province and particularly to the women in the province of Saskatchewan. Women have been recognized more so in the last ten years in this province than in its entire history, and I think it's incumbent upon all of us to get behind the Lieutenant Governor and help her in any which way, shape or form we can to ensure that her role is a successful role and that she does accomplish the various attempts that she wishes to make and as she's serving the public.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to take the opportunity now to also congratulate my colleague, the member from

Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I want to say that he was a great enhancement to our caucus. He's bringing a lot of ideas and fresh ideas in from the countryside, and I want to indicate that it's just a thrill to be able to work with him, and I want to congratulate the people that elected the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I want to congratulate those people because they did send a quality, a very quality individual to this legislature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I listened to what the member from Humboldt was indicating here as far as this government's commitment to agriculture is concerned, and that's where I'll begin my remarks.

(1645)

He's probably the only individual that has even come close to being a farmer on the NDP side of the House. And I want to indicate, before I begin talking into the things that we've done for agriculture, that on this side of the House at least half or two-thirds of our caucus are made up of farmers, are made up of ranchers, are made up of individuals that all their lives have/had worked in the agricultural communities. And not only that but have sat on councils in R.M.s in towns and villages and have worked not only with the farmers but the small businesses in this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I look at this government's commitment to the agricultural community in the province of Saskatchewan, I want to say that's probably one of the strongest commitments any government has ever made in its entirety right across this nation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the billions of dollars that this government had to itself bring forth or ask for from the federal government to come and help us in times of drought, in times of flood, in times of depressed prices, in times of high interest rates. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say that when our Premier said he would go to the wall for agriculture, he had, and he is, and he will. His commitment . . .

An Hon. Member: — The Great Wall of China.

Mr. Hopfner: — The members opposite said he went to the wall of China. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I agree. He did go to the wall of China, and he'll continue to go to the wall of China. He's not only went to the wall for agriculture, but he's continuing on the basis that he's trying to do things that you have never done. He is trying to open up new markets for agriculture over in the Pacific rim.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate to you that our commitment is reflected by some of our programs, and that is reflected by our farm assistance and protection programs. We have aggressively pursued our own policies provincially and lobbied hard for national policies which will continue to strengthen the industry and protect our province's family farms.

The member from Riversdale should pay attention to this. We protect family farms, Mr. Speaker, because we care. We don't nationalize them. Mr. Speaker, the member from Riversdale has spoken out on agriculture. Most of the members of the Assembly may have missed this earth

shattering event, but let me read it aloud today, Mr. Speaker.

He stated in the *Star-Phoenix* — it was a Tuesday, December 27, 1988 — he stated that one of the most difficult policy areas will be in the intergenerational transfer of farm lands.

That's the problem. Listen carefully now. Here comes the important part. The member from Riversdale, he stresses that whatever plans his party develops, they will not be along the lines of land bank. That is as specific as the member opposite has gotten in the area of agricultural policies and yet he has the audacity to accuse this government of not caring. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that every one of the individuals that have spoken over the last while in this Assembly from the NDP opposition, there has not been once, there has not been once where through all their pretty, beautiful little words that they use in this Assembly to try and baffle the public out there as they're watching this Assembly and watching their speeches and listening.

If those people ever, ever take the time to try and draw out of any one of their speeches any kind of commitment that their party is making to agriculture, I would challenge anybody from the public to bring that forward, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has not been one idea. There has not been one commitment to the public and to the farmers in this province. All they've done over there is ridicule all the programs that have helped to keep the families on the farms here in the province.

What they're upset about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the fact that they themselves never acted when they were in government. Because I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if they would have taken the opportunity to act when they were in government and when the Leader of the Opposition was deputy premier, I will say we would have had a hard time being in government. We would have had a hard time getting a vote from the people. The Progressive Conservative government would maybe not be here today. It might have been those guys across the way that would have been and maintained their government position.

But no, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite, they turn their backs on the family farms. They turn their backs on the families of the province of Saskatchewan. They did not listen. They were pleading with the NDP government of that day. They were asking for protection from high interest rates so that they could afford their mortgage payments. But no, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they drove people out of their homes. They drove them out of the province. There was no help.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate to you that they still profit. They profit on agriculture. The Leader of the Opposition and his law firm profits by taking action against farmers and driving them off, working for the banks and the big multinational corporation, the banks that they profess . . . they stand up in this room and profess that they're so much against.

They say that we're in bed with them. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate to you that the public ought to

just take a good close look at who's in bed with the multinational banks because they would see that it is the member from Riversdale and his organization, the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when it comes to a point, when it comes to a point of them arguing the fact that, well this government's foreclosing on farm lands, you know, well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was just a . . . I almost couldn't stand it. It was just that silly.

It gets to a point where they just cannot come back with any other argument and other new ideas, and then they come in here with tabling some little documents of actions that are taken on some farms that haven't paid back the agreement.

But I want to indicate to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that probably we have about 50,000 farmers in Saskatchewan — 50,000. And I want to indicate to you that there's about 1 per cent of those farmers, maybe 1 per cent of those farmers, that have actually not been able to make those commitments because of the horrendous problems that they've got into.

So, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about 1 per cent, you could take about 99 per cent of the individuals that entered into the program . . . government programs that it helped them back in, say, 1986 when we came out with the production loan program, I believe it was, and there was so many dollars per acre and there was a three-year commitment to pay it back. Well, we didn't even hold the farmers at that. We lengthened it. We lengthened it. If they needed more time, we put it to 10 years. But 1 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we are responsible by law, responsible to collect the debt that an individual had borrowed.

So what I'm saying to you is, by law, our government has got to take actions. But when the member opposite, acting as . . . is Leader of the Opposition and is in the law firm, he has a choice, an individual choice. He has an individual choice to say no to the bank. He has that individual choice to say, I'm not going to allow my law firm to take part of this because I don't believe in it. I don't believe that this should be happening. But he did. He profited, personally profited. And then the member from Humboldt has the audacity to say that they're in favour of protecting the family farm. They're the end-all to all the problems out there for the family farm.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll just give you an idea of about how the Leader of the Opposition and the whole . . . the NDP caucus have ideas and commitments and how they can make up their mind as to what they're going to do for the problems in Saskatchewan here and . . . when they become government.

The Leader of the Opposition was questioned on the uranium issue and his answer in the paper . . . was questioned as to what he was going to do with uranium and stuff like this, and his answer was:

Well I'm not sure that I have the luxury of expressing that point of view any more. I just don't

think a party leader's choices in public discussions of this nature are very great. I think my job is to be the trustee of the party resolutions.

Now that was in volume 16, no. 10, December 1987, in their own *Briarpatch*. I asked the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, in the *Briarpatch*. But I ask the members opposite, where they're split on this themselves across the way in their caucus, as to where their ideas are in uranium mining in this province and in the job situation is.

But here's another, and this one was on abortion. And when Romanow was asked . . . oh, pardon me, I take that back; I understand. When the member from Riversdale was asked by a student whether he would extend human rights to the unborn, he answered:

This may sound as though I'm trying not to give you answers on these particular questions, but I must stress that within the New Democratic Party, policy is written by the convention of the party.

And where does the party lie? I asked everybody out in the TV land, where does the NDP stand on this? I know where I stand. I know where I stand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I believe in life.

But here's another one, here's another question that was asked the Leader of the Opposition:

Will you legislate to recover lost Crown corporations?

And we've all heard they are, I guess, but here's his answer as of December '87, January '88 in the *Briarpatch*:

That decision's going to have to be made if and when we assume office.

If and when he assumes office, they're going to make that decision.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate to you that our government has a vision. It has a vision of taking Saskatchewan forward. It has a vision of promoting Saskatchewan and keeping it in the world window.

And I want to indicate to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this world window that I'm referring to is just exactly what those members opposite are opposed to. They're opposed to our leader; they're opposed to this government travelling around the world and promoting Saskatchewan agriculture and Saskatchewan business.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've had inroads and we have proof. We have the proof and I'm going to bring the proof to your attention in a few minutes.

But I want to indicate to you how that proof is beginning. That proof is beginning through public participation. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that public participation is an answer to the demise of the province's problems that we've been having . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Being near 5 o'clock, the House

is recessed until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.

The following is a reproduction of Mr. Kowalsky's words spoken in Ukrainian as provided by the member.

I. УЧІТЕСЯ, БРАТИ МОЇ!

Учітеся, брати мої!
Думайте, читайте,
І чужому навчайтесь, —
Свого не цурайтесь:

Бо хто Матір забуває,
Того Бог карає,
Чужі люди цураються,
В хату не пускають.