

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce this morning to you, and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, a delegation of elected officials from the city of Melfort who are sitting in your gallery. I would like to introduce to all members, Mayor Carol Carson; seated beside her is Alderman Dub Henderson, Alderman Don McRobb, Alderman Terry Elliott, Alderman Charlie Clark, and city administrator Ken Dobson.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be important for you to know that this delegation was up very early this morning. They left the city of Melfort at approximately 4:30, were in my office at 7:30, and we had a very nice visit. So I welcome the officials from the city of Melfort, and I would ask all my colleagues to join with me in that.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Job Losses at Cameco

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is to the Deputy Premier, and it relates to the privatization of SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation), and now Cameco, in what appears to be another piece of solid evidence about what privatization really means to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, namely, job loss and loss of economic control in this province.

My question to the Deputy Premier is this: would the Deputy Premier confirm reports that Cameco has announced lay-offs of substantial numbers of workers — some reports that we've received being up to a third of the workers — has announced those lay-offs, and that for the balance of the workers there has been redeployment to other jobs but with no guarantee of return back to their original jobs. Will the Deputy Premier please confirm that that's the case? And how does he explain this latest example of PC-style privatization?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I understand that yesterday in Saskatoon there was an announcement of lay-offs, and workers at the Star Lake mine received notice of a lay-off, Mr. Speaker. I think there were 35 people involved at the Star Lake mine.

And the reason for the lay-offs at the Star Lake mine . . . You will recall, Mr. Speaker, about two and a half years ago when the Star Lake mine was announced, it was announced that there was about two and a half years worth of ore to be milled at that mine. Now as it turned out, they were pretty well right on target. There was about two and a half years worth of ore, and when they ran out

of ore, Mr. Speaker, they chose not to just crunch rock through for the sake of keeping the mill open.

They are quite hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that as a result of some new and good discoveries close by that Cameco is involved in with other joint venture partners, that they will be able to get the mill operating again soon, and we hope, Mr. Speaker, that that will be the case.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Deputy Premier, and I must premise my question by saying that that is exactly, I think, the only thing left in this PC government, and that is, hope — lots of hope and lots of prayer that something turns around, because certainly the statements don't gibe with the reality. Mr. Deputy Premier, when we inquired of this privatization a year ago, you told this legislature, page 2451, I quote directly:

You can rest assured, Mr. Speaker, that the people who work at SMDC today will be working there in the new merged uranium company as well. That was a (re)commitment that was given by this government and SMDC, and that will be a commitment that is delivered, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Premier, those are your words. My question to you is: how do you square that assertion, that promise to the workers that privatization would not mean job loss, how do you square that with today's announcement of 40 people at least being laid off?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I'd like to once more remind the hon. members that unparliamentary language is not acceptable — order, order — unparliamentary language is not acceptable in this House, whether the individual is speaking and has the Chair or whether he's seated. That is the type of thing that spreads a bad atmosphere in the House and is difficult to control.

So I'd simply like to ask hon. members — order! — hon. members on both sides of the House for their co-operation in not using unparliamentary language. That's a reasonable request.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder what the merger or privatization has to do with the depletion of an ore body. Mr. Speaker, when the ore body has been depleted, now it may be socialist economics to continue digging and pumping it through the mill in the event that one grain of gold may be found at the outside chance, but that's not the way that the industry works. They like to have a proven reserve before they build the mill, and when the mill then crunches all this rock through and gets the gold out, then they look for new reserves to keep the mill going, and that's exactly what they're doing, Mr. Speaker.

I said, Mr. Speaker, that there would be no job loss as a result of the merger, Mr. Speaker. That's been the case —

that's been the case.

Now compare that, compare that, Mr. Speaker, to the stated position of members opposite. You want to talk about job loss? They have said that they will close down the uranium industry in the North. Now to compensate for a closed-down uranium industry, they want to continue to operate a depleted gold mine, Mr. Speaker. Tell me what the sense of that is.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A new question to the Deputy Premier. I want to preface the question by saying to the Deputy Premier and to all of his fine colleagues who are in support of him at the back, when I'm sitting over there as the premier, I'll be answering the questions about what we do.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — And I might add, I'll be answering the questions fully and truthfully . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, Order, order, order. Would you allow the Leader of the Opposition to put his question.

**Mr. Romanow:** — As I said, Mr. Speaker, I will be over there answering the questions fully and frankly to the people of Saskatchewan.

My question to the Deputy Premier is this: he this morning would have us believe that all of a sudden he found out that the ore body has run out. Is the Deputy Premier telling us that we should accept, actually accept that he did not know that a year ago, that he didn't know that about the situation with respect to the Star Lake mine a year ago; that the planning was based in such a way that he would not be aware of it? And if he was not aware of it, or if he was aware of it, how in the world does he justify this statement of a year ago that says there will be absolutely no job lay-offs?

Look, Mr. Deputy Premier, my question to you is this: why don't you fess up? Privatization means one thing and one thing only, a sell-off of Saskatchewan assets to big business friends and lost jobs and miseries for Saskatchewan families. Fess up.

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, we knew two and a half years, we knew two and a half years ago, and we told everybody two and a half years ago. We said that there would be about two and a half years worth of ore at the Star Lake mine, and that happened to be about two years ago.

There's absolutely nothing, nothing to do as it relates to the depletion of this ore body with the merger. The only way we could have extended the life of the ore body is to shut the mine down earlier and then bring it on at some later date to satisfy members opposite. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope, I sincerely hope that when that member becomes the premier of this province . . .

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — I sincerely hope, Mr. Speaker, that the government of today has taken care of the development of our economy, particularly in the North, in such a way, Mr. Speaker, as to ensure a sustained mining industry in northern Saskatchewan, particularly in the uranium sector that they have said they're going to close down. And secondly, Mr. Speaker, I hope that they don't insist on operating depleted ore bodies, and I hope that when he comes here, Mr. Speaker, he has a lot more sense than he's displayed to date because I want, Mr. Speaker, to have a pension in my old age, and one that . . .

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

### Increase in Interest Rates

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Deputy Premier, in the absence of the Premier. If the Premier has developed any skills in his years in office, it is his ability to avoid problems and obfuscate on issues. Yet even he seems to have run out of room on the question of interest rates after yesterday's severe jump in the prime rate. Even he seems to admit there's a modest problem in Saskatchewan with the prime rate at that level.

My question to the Deputy Premier is whether or not you're prepared to take any concrete steps. I once recalled referring to the Premier's relationship with Brian Mulroney as a small dog on a short leash. We're asking you to jerk the leash a bit this time, Mr. Premier.

Mr. Deputy Premier, my question is whether or not you're prepared to take the step which we urged last Friday and join with the official opposition in sending a resolution to Ottawa urging that the high interest rate policy be adopted. Are you prepared to take that step?

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, the Premier indicated on several occasions, and once again this morning on national television, that the interest rate policy being pursued by the federal government is a wrong-headed policy; that the policy is designed, or so stated, to attempt to cool off inflation that for the most part is focused in Toronto and Vancouver, and that the rest of the country is paying the price for it. He made the observation — the city of Saskatoon is a good example — where the inflation rate is running at about 2 per cent. Hardly you need high interest rate policies to cool off a 2 per cent inflation type of situation.

Now the member opposite, the member from Regina Centre, indicates, what are we doing about it.

Now in 1982, when interest rates were at 20 per cent we brought in a policy, Mr. Speaker, that brought interest rates down to thirteen and one-quarter, which is about where they are now. 1986 . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — They were against it.

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Exactly, they were against it. In 1986, we brought that down further to all people with a mortgage in the province of Saskatchewan to nine and three-quarters.

The members opposite, when they were in power, at 20 per cent interest rates did zero, Mr. Speaker, did nothing. We have brought those rates down effectively to the consumers of Saskatchewan to nine and three-quarters, something that no other province is doing.

Are we doing something about it? Yes, we are doing something about it.

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can well understand the man who brought in the most intelligent budget ever might be somewhat reluctant to deal with the problem which, Mr. Minister, you contributed to so largely with your enormous deficits over the years.

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — All that we ask, Mr. Minister, is that you put that concern in the most convincing manner possible and join us before orders of the day in giving leave to move the following resolution:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Canada to abandon its policy of high interest rates.

My question, Mr. Minister, is — this resolution was drafted in a non-partisan form — will you join us in taking this simple, effective step.

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, I would respond to that question in the following way. Would the hon. member be prepared to recant and to say that their policy that they pursued before 1982 was wrong-headed? Would they now join with us, Mr. Speaker, in advocating the policies that we have employed here — in other words, nine and three-quarter per cent interest rates to the mortgage holders in Saskatchewan — would they join with us, indicating to Ottawa that this is a good policy being pursued in the province of Saskatchewan, something recommended by the federal government to assist both us and other provinces across the country?

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's apparent, Mr. Speaker, that the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's a new question. I think it's apparent, Mr. Speaker, that the bankruptcy of this government is complete when they haven't anything to say except to harp back to 1982 and to suggest that we created high interest rates.

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

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Minister, nobody's accusing you of creating high interest rates. We're accusing you of doing nothing about it and being bankrupt on the subject.

My question to the minister: will you and your colleagues, if you haven't the courage or the nerve to speak on behalf of Saskatchewan people on this issue, Mr. Minister, are you and your colleagues prepared to call an election so that the people of Saskatchewan can determine whether or not they want to be led by such a gutless government?

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, if a policy was brought in in 1982 . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. The Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — . . . if a policy was brought in in 1982 that was valid for that time, if that policy is still valid today, Mr. Speaker, there has been people that have been assisted in paying their mortgages in 1982, 1983, 1984, '85, '86, '87, '88, '89. And those people this very day, Mr. Speaker, receive the benefit of only a nine and three-quarters per cent mortgage. Now the member opposite would have people believe, those very people that pre-1982, when interest rates were at 20 per cent and sat on their duffs and did nothing, should now ask the people, elect me and I will deal with your interest rates. People are not that stupid, Mr. Speaker!

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

### Help for Small Business

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance, as well. And I want to say to the minister that all of the small-business community in Saskatchewan is really excited about this little performance you've had in the last couple of minutes.

I want to know, Mr. Finance Minister, what your little tirade is going to do and your little talk about 1982 or 1972 or 1942 is going to do to help the small-business community in Saskatchewan? What's it going to do in 1989 — today — to keep the stores open on Main Street, Melfort; Main Street, Prince Albert; Main Street, Lafleche, Saskatchewan; Main Street, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan? What have you said that's going to offer any encouragement to those folks, Mr. Minister?

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, the members opposite first of all say that the NDP are the people that stand for helping people with interest rates. Now we are to believe that, Mr. Speaker. Now they are to have us believe that it is the NDP that stand for business; the NDP stand for business, Mr. Speaker.

The member opposite says what have we done for business, Mr. Speaker? Well, less than a year ago we put forward \$10 million to assist small business in the province of Saskatchewan, and what did we hear from the members opposite?

**An Hon. Member:** — They were against that.

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — They were against that — \$10 million into the pockets of small business in Saskatchewan — they were against it, and now they say to business, trust us socialists because we really have the interest of business at heart.

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

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — New question to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, can you tell — you won't answer the question, clearly; clearly, your pipeline to Mulroney is plugged — can you tell us, can you tell us what you're going to do in this budget to help the small-business people in Saskatchewan who are closing their doors, leaving this province by the hundreds? Can you tell, is there going to be anything in this budget for small business?

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the tradition of the parliamentary system, I would ask the hon. member to just be patient until next week. He will find out what is, in fact, in the budget, Mr. Speaker, and then I would also encourage him, when there are those nice things in the budget, that the hon. member will stand up and congratulate the government for it.

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

### Increasing Drop-out Rates in Schools

**Ms. Atkinson:** — My question's to the Minister of Education, and after the performance that we've just witnessed in this legislature from the Deputy Premier and the acting Finance Minister, no wonder young people don't have any hope in Saskatchewan.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, I have an internal study funded by the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association, and this study done by experts from the University of Saskatchewan shows that the Grade 8 to 12 school drop-out rate in Saskatchewan has increased by 50 per cent since 1980-81.

Since this study is nearly one year old, can you tell the parents, trustees, teachers and students of this province what specific action your government's going to take to turn this critical situation around.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Just to keep things in total perspective, Mr. Speaker, first of all I think we would all work under the assumption that we would like to see all the children who start in kindergarten or grade 1 in schools in the province go on to finish their entire years right through grade 12, and in fact even have the opportunity to go on to post-secondary education. I think whether you're a trustee, a parent, a teacher, a government representative, an opposition representative, we would all like to aspire to that goal.

And indeed, if one looks over the last two or three

decades, we've made some significant headway from where we had only 50 per cent of our children completing grade 12 to now where we're in that 75 per cent neighbourhood. But we must do more, Mr. Speaker; programs like the community school programs that are aimed specifically at schools with a high native population; to look at innovative ways to involve parents; involve the community in keeping those children in school; initiatives against that whole area of drug and alcohol abuse, Mr. Speaker, that wreck a lot of lives and end up with children dropping out of school sooner than we would like to see them.

There is probably no one simple answer here, Mr. Speaker. We will be continuing our initiatives in this area, working with trustees, working with parents to see if we can't improve these numbers, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — A new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, education and hope is the key to the future in Saskatchewan.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Young people have to have the tools to compete in the market-place because you have said so. This study shows that fewer and fewer students are going to have those tools. When are you going to understand that longer graduation lines today mean shorter unemployment lines tomorrow? And what are you going to do, Mr. Minister, to turn this crisis around?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, we have programs designed in terms of some specific initiatives. We're talking about community schools that are aimed particularly at those schools that have inner-city . . . tend to be inner-city and with high native populations.

I could talk about the Saskatoon native survival school. It's an alternative school designed to accommodate and provide meaningful experience to the students who have dropped out of the regular school system.

I could talk about NORTEP (northern teacher education program) and SUNTEP (Saskatchewan urban native teacher education program), Mr. Speaker, our northern teacher education, our southern teacher education programs, training native teachers with innovative, individualized programs.

I could talk about our full range of drug and alcohol abuse programs, Mr. Speaker. I could talk about our new curriculum and how that's designed to help encourage young people have the tools for the future and, as well, keep them in school, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — New question to the Minister. Mr. Minister, the young people of this province need future-oriented programs and policies that give them

hope, and you're not offering them hope. Talk is cheap. What we need is innovative, future-oriented programs to encourage young people to stay in school.

Mr. Minister, if you weren't wasting \$9 million on a birthday party, and if you weren't wasting \$20 million on useless PC government advertising, those kinds of innovative, future-oriented programs could be in place to offer young people hope. When are you going to put Saskatchewan students and Saskatchewan children first?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raised the whole issue of the future, the future of our young people, and that's pretty hollow rhetoric coming from an NDP opposition member, when in the next breath she criticizes the Future Corporation that talks exactly about the future that our young people will play, and the role our young people will play in the global village of the future, Mr. Speaker.

And for the hon. member's information, that very program that she's against, that very program that she's against, the Future Corporation — that very initiative she's against is the very corporation that the first project that they announced, Mr. Speaker, the very first project that was announced by the Future Corporation was a project for our high school children to participate in a scenario when they could see themselves looking at where Saskatchewan can take itself in the future, whether it be in our economic development areas, the high-tech areas. Mr. Speaker, it's very much an educational initiative, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

## MOTIONS

### High Interest Rates

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I seek leave pursuant to rule 39 to move the following resolution:

That this Assembly urges the Government of Canada to abandon its policy of high interest rates, which is tailored to the needs of central Canada and which will aggravate the economic hardship facing Saskatchewan farmers, business people, and consumers.

I seek leave to move that motion, seconded by the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

Leave not granted.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### SECOND READINGS

### Bill No. 7 — An Act respecting the Protection of Children and the Provision of Support Services to Families

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order, order. We'll be unable to get to second readings without some co-operation. Order, order. Order, order, order.

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd be pleased to commence the second reading speech; however, with the shouting from . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I must once more ask the House for their co-operation. We can't do the business of the House if the hon. member is interrupted continuously, so I think we should all co-operate.

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased that you are impressing upon the members of the opposition some respect for democracy.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. I don't think that comment was warranted either. I'd just like to ask the minister to get on with his second reading.

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, allow me to shout out this speech as we proceed today. It gives me great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to shout here . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I think this is the last time I'm going to call for order. We're all responsible people, and I've asked three times, I believe, and that should certainly be enough.

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say to the members present today that I'm pleased to introduce The Child and Family Services Act which comes before this Assembly today to revise the law in this area. It's been approximately 17 or 18 years since the last Act was revised and passed, and the families of Saskatchewan and our society has changed considerably in that period of time.

I want to review briefly today what this Act will cover and why it's so important to the families of Saskatchewan. The emphasis of this Act, Mr. Speaker, is to support families and help keep families together. And we are all familiar with the all too common family problems that we have in our society today and the family disruptions that we see as a result primarily of the life-styles that we have adopted in this country and in the western world.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, this Act will emphasize out-of-court resolution of disputes and issues. We are trying to attempt, wherever possible, to have family issues settled through discussion, through reasonable consideration, rather than go to the courts which will only be used as a last resort.

I can say, Mr. Speaker, that it gives me no pleasure as the Minister of Social Services to have to intervene and take children away from their families. As we speak today, there are approximately 2,000 — I think it's grown to

about 2,200 children that are now wards of the province of Saskatchewan — for which, on your behalf, I have responsibility. We try to limit the numbers but, however, unfortunately in some instances we have to intervene.

There will be in those instances where the province has to intervene in the family, an Act here that will make the intervention as fair as possible and as minimal as possible. We will try to have, wherever possible, voluntary agreements or mediation so as to avoid dragging the family through court.

Mediators will be people deemed by myself and appointed from the community, and they will be judging the parenting standards. So we will try to obtain people who have parenting skills, people who have wisdom in the ways of the world so that they can act as mediators to help solve these disputes within families and situations where the province of Saskatchewan has to intervene on behalf of the children.

This new Act, Mr. Speaker, will require the reporting of child abuse, with a fine for failure to do so. It will be the responsibility of every citizen in Saskatchewan unless they have a legal exemption. Every citizen will have the responsibility to report child abuse or child neglect where it gets to the state where the child's health or their growth and development are in danger.

This Act, Mr. Speaker, will also empower the department to screen for child abuse, to screen child abuse reports, so that not every report that comes to my department will result in a full-fledged investigation. My department officials will have the discretion to determine whether, in this situation, the Bill will say the department officials will determine whether the case has any merit or whether it's frivolous, so that if someone totally falsely accuses someone of child abuse, my department will make a decision based on their discretion and only investigate those cases which warrant investigation. This is the same power that the police have used for years to not investigate where they think there is a hoax or something frivolous. This is an initial screening process that will be allowed in this Bill.

This Bill will, furthermore, attempt to define more clearly what actually amounts to neglect or child abuse. And I believe that all members will understand it is very difficult to draw the exact line as to what is neglect or what is abuse and what might be discipline or what might be poor parenting that does not warrant the state's intervention. This is an extremely complicated and sensitive area. This Bill will attempt to clarify this area of what is child abuse and/or neglect.

This Bill will, in addition, clarify when a child may be apprehended. By this we mean, Mr. Speaker, taken away from its family. The Bill will also provide, for the first time ever, family review panels. These panels will have the initial power to decide whether the child stays with the family or is kept in an institution or a foster home pending resolution of the problem, further mediation, or possibly a final court decision.

And what will happen is that rather than have the current situation where a child is taken from the family and the

matter remains before the courts, as to whether or not the child should go back into the family or whether the child should stay as a ward of the province. This can take many months, and therefore the family has not had the power to go before anyone and say, give us our child back, under certain conditions, or we will change things, and then the long-term decision can be made later.

These family review panels of wise and true citizens selected throughout Saskatchewan will have the power to say, this child should be sent back to the family, and will have for the first time ever also the power to set conditions under which the child is to go back to the family.

And I don't like to compare a family situation to a criminal case situation. However, what this will allow is that where you have a bail application in a court situation where someone is released into society pending the outcome of their trial, in this case the panel will have the power to send the child back to the family under conditions, pending the final outcome. And we believe this will assist in the resolving of family disputes and will assist in the raising of children without lengthy court cases. We want to use the court as a last resort in family problems.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the Bill also contains provisions for children under the age of 12 who have committed criminal offences but are too young to be charged as young offenders under the Young Offenders Act. This will give my department the power to deal with the correction of those children under the age of 12.

And we believe this is extremely necessary because children under the age of 12 have to be disciplined and have to be taught what is right and what is wrong and how to live in society. Because the experts in families tell us that the first 12 years are more important than the next 12 years. So we have to have the power in this Bill to get to the children before they become a major problem, and this Bill will try to remedy that situation.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, this Bill will provide for provisions for 16- and 17-year-olds. However, this will be on a voluntary basis. And we have an unusual situation where, when the Young Offenders Act was proclaimed, the Department of Social Services took jurisdiction over 16- and 17-year-olds. And these are predominantly males who are really not boys and not quite men, and they're in a transition stage. And a lot of them get into a lot of difficulty. We have some females, but it's predominantly males. Seems that we as males have a more difficult time settling down in this age group.

What we're trying to do in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is make a provision where we can voluntarily assist 16- and 17-year-olds, but we do not intend to make it mandatory that we provide child and family services protection to all 16- and 17-year-olds. And the reasoning behind this, Mr. Speaker, is that we find it extremely difficult for the government — and as a matter of fact many parents also find it extremely difficult — to completely manage how a 16-year-old or a 17-year-old will live their lives. And it's quite difficult for us to take a 17-year-old and put them into a foster home, for example, where they are difficult to handle if they are totally rebellious.

So we are not making this provision mandatory, but we are making provision to allow services to these people who are not quite children and not quite adult in a transition stage.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill also makes provision for the court to order protective measures other than the removing of the child from a home. In the past it's been quite restricted on what courts could do, and we want to allow courts and this family mediation panel the power, as I indicated earlier, to say, all right, the child can return to the home under these conditions.

Possibly some aggravating situation that had been causing a problem may have to be removed. In some cases this could be one parent. It could be a parent that has problems with substance abuse. But the courts will have the power to set conditions in order to keep the family together, while we on behalf of the government try to improve the family so that it can be self-sufficient rather than become a broken family and a permanent burden on society that leads to long-term problems with the children and the grandchildren.

So these are some of the things that we are trying to do in this Bill. And in addition, the Bill will recognize the role of foster parents and provide for foster care service agreements, so that where we do have to remove children from their families due to abuse or neglect, we have now beefed up the foster-parents program. And there will be specific agreements under this Bill for foster-parents to provide certain treatment to these children.

There is also something else that is historic in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, and that is that this Bill will allow for Indian child welfare agreements using Indian bands in Saskatchewan to deliver the services. Now this will have to be in conjunction with the responsibility of the federal government to provide services on reserves, but we are prepared in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, to give the province's jurisdiction, by delegation, to Indian bands in Saskatchewan so that they can deal with their own young people.

And, Mr. Speaker, this government believes firmly, and is in agreement with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, that the province of Saskatchewan cannot raise Indian children on the reserves, or cannot take them into the care of the province; that the problems of the families on Indian reserves and in our native community have to be resolved by our native people. And we are prepared to give them the jurisdiction and the authority to deal with their own children through the means of this Act.

(1045)

In addition, Mr. Speaker, this Act, for the first time in the history of Saskatchewan, allows Indian bands to intervene with respect to the welfare of treaty Indian children. It gives them status in courts, the similar type of status that parents would have, and it also takes into account, and the Act takes into account, the cultural background of all children.

This is not only Indian children but children of all origins.

They could be children of English, Scottish, Irish, German, or Indian origin. However, this is a suggestion of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, that cultural background be considered. And this Act, and the other Acts that I will speak to this morning, will for the first time allow for the cultural background of the child to be taken into consideration when courts or family mediation panels are dealing with a child.

Another provision in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to make provision for openness in dealing with the clientele, while at the same time trying to maintain the principle of confidentiality. The Bill will provide so that we release as much information as possible to the parents, to everyone interested, to Indian bands if they show interest in the child. We will try to release as much information as possible so that they can openly deal with the problem. The Government of Saskatchewan has nothing to hide with respect to children, in the care of children.

So therefore this Bill will liberalize the law with respect to information but yet respect confidentiality. Some things are the business of the relatives, of the province; they may be the business of the Indian band, but they are not the business of society as a whole. The problems of families and children are not to be open to idle gossip and for the public's insatiable demand to gossip about the problems of our society. We will open it but we will not allow confidentiality to be broken.

In addition this Bill allows for the charging of fees in some situations, and the Bill provides for the allowing of charging of fees by the province where the service provided to the family or the individual is not a service that all of the public would require, where it's some sort of a special service only for the benefit of that individual.

And we have situations where we have brought in programs in our department that are special, they are new, they are not common to anywhere else in Canada, and they have been so popular that we feel that where they provide a specific service that is not essential to the public but helps that individual; that where people can afford to pay for some of the costs of that service, that this Bill will allow for the charging of fees where people have the means to pay.

This is not to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Social Services intends to make any money. I might say that we have a budget in excess of \$375 million annually, and we use this for the neediest people. But for those people who require special services that are not essential but that they would like to have that service, then we want to be in a position to provide that service.

So all in all, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that this Act is a revision to bring the current law into the 1990s, to bring this province and its families into the next century. It is a Bill that allows an openness and an honesty in the administration of Social Services in the services to families and children.

And this Bill will set the stage for dealing with the problems that the fast life and the ever changing world of modern technology has brought to our society. So it's with great pleasure I move second reading of this Bill, Mr.

Speaker.

**Mr. Prebble:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to enter into the debate on this Bill today. I'll be making a few introductory remarks and then, at the end of those remarks, asking for leave to adjourn the debate. And I'll reserve most of my major comments, I think, for next week on this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

But I do want to say, first of all, that we agree with the Minister of Social Services that the need for new legislation in this field is long overdue, and therefore we welcome the introduction of a new Bill in this area. I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that there are a number of areas of this Bill that I think will be positively received by the people of Saskatchewan.

I'm particularly pleased, for instance, to see the provision for protective intervention orders in this Bill that will make it possible for children to stay in the home, while those who are the source of the abuse may be removed from the home.

I also welcome, at long last, the provision for 16- and 17-year-olds, on a voluntary basis, to receive services under this Bill. We've long had a crisis in this province, Mr. Speaker, where 16- and 17-year-olds were simply unable to get any urgently needed services under the family services Act.

And that, Mr. Speaker, brings me to the heart of the point that I'd like to make this morning with respect to this Bill, and that is that the usefulness of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, will depend on whether or not this government is prepared to put into place the resources at the community level to support families in crisis.

And, Mr. Speaker, the record of this government to date, with respect to cutting services to families that are in crisis, is bleak indeed. And if that record continues, as I suspect it will, Mr. Speaker — but we'll see in the budget next week — if that record continues, then this legislation will, to a significant degree, be ineffective in terms of helping families and helping children.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I noted that the minister said that there are now some 2,200 children in his care as Minister of Social Services in the province of Saskatchewan, and I note, Mr. Speaker, that that's a significant increase of at least 200 over the situation three years ago. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the reason that we've seen another increase in the number of children who have had to become wards of the Minister of Social Services is because this government and this Minister of Social Services has dramatically cut back services to families in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to give a few examples of what I mean by this before I beg leave to adjourn the debate. First of all, on the front line, in terms of providing services to families in crisis, and integral to the operation of this legislation that's before the House now, Mr. Speaker, is the operation of the Mobile Crisis Services in Regina and Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

And what have we seen the government do to the mobile

crisis intervention services in this province since being re-elected in 1986, Mr. Speaker? Well in Regina, their budget in 1986 was \$400,000, Mr. Speaker, and today in 1988-89 fiscal year, it's \$326,000. In other words, Mr. Speaker, they cut \$74,000 from the budget of the mobile crisis intervention services in Regina.

What did they do to the mobile crisis intervention services in Saskatoon? They cut the budget, Mr. Speaker, from \$344,000 in 1986 to \$299,000 today, Mr. Speaker. And it's the same in Prince Albert, a cut from \$270,000 in 1986 to \$168,000 today.

Now I tell the Minister of Social Services, that with a record like that, you can bring in whatever legislation you want. And while this legislation has many useful provisions, it will be ineffective if you don't provide the services on the ground to implement the legislation.

I just want to give a couple of other examples if I might, Mr. Speaker. Every Friendship Centre in this province, every single Friendship Centre has had its programs slashed by the Minister of Social Services. There are family service workers in every one of those friendship centres, Mr. Speaker. And what's happened? We've seen cuts in the last two years of in the range of 15 to 20 per cent in all of those Friendship Centre programs for family service workers.

Just by way of an example, Mr. Speaker, the Friendship Centre in Regina, cut from a budget of 70,000 in 1986-87 for its family service workers, to 54,000 in the current fiscal year; the Friendship Centre at Meadow Lake, cut from over \$31,000 in 1986 to only \$27,000 today, Mr. Speaker.

The Friendship Centre in La Ronge, cut from almost \$32,000 in 1986 to \$27,000 today. And those are just the cuts, Mr. Speaker, since the 1986 election. The previous Minister of Social Services slashed the family service worker budgets in those friendship centres by more than 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

And in addition to that, this government eliminated all the recreation programs in the friendship centres for young people in this province to try to keep them off the streets. And that's the kind of record, Mr. Speaker, that will make it very difficult for the legislation that the minister brings before us today to be effected.

I just want to give one other example before I close in this area, and that is, Mr. Speaker, that one of the key elements to this legislation being successful is to have good counselling services available throughout the province of Saskatchewan without people having to wait lengthy periods of time to access counselling. That's absolutely key, Mr. Speaker.

If a family is in crisis, it does them no good to go down to the Family Service Bureau in Moose Jaw or Regina or Saskatoon, and be told that there's a six-week waiting list before they can see a counsellor. That does them no good at all, Mr. Speaker. Some families can wait six weeks, but many families can't, Mr. Speaker.

And what we've seen this government do since being



re-elected in 1986 is to freeze the budgets for all the counselling services offered by family service bureaus in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And the result of that is that families in Regina and Saskatoon do have to wait six weeks before they can access counselling services in this province.

And I just again want to give a couple of examples here, Mr. Speaker, and I want members of the legislature and viewers who are listening to bear in mind that we've had considerable inflation since the 1986 election.

Family Service Bureau of Regina budget in 1986 for counselling services, \$108,000. Budget today, \$105,000, Mr. Speaker, and that does not take account of the fact that we've had inflation of in excess of 10 per cent during that time. In real terms, we're looking here at a 12 to 13 per cent cut in counselling services for the Family Service Bureau of Regina.

Exactly the same situation for the Catholic Family Service bureau in Regina — a cut from \$81,000 in 1986 to 70, almost \$79,000 two and a half years later, Mr. Speaker, and there's been 10 per cent inflation in the meantime.

And it's exactly the same situation in Saskatoon. The Catholic Family Service bureau, their counselling program has been cut back from \$80,000 in 1986 to 77 and a half thousand dollars in 1988-89. And the Minto Family Life Education Centre in Moose Jaw has had their counselling budget frozen now for the last three years, Mr. Speaker.

And I tell the Minister of Social Services that it simply won't do to bring in new legislation if you're not prepared to put the services in place to implement that legislation.

We're seeing long waiting lists, Mr. Speaker, at the Crisis Nursery in Saskatoon. Families are in crisis, they want to place their children in the nursery, and they can't get them in. It's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, that this Minister of Social Services would let that happen. And I say that until he comes forward with a budget that will enforce and implement this legislation, then this Bill will have little effect in helping families in crisis, despite some of the positive measures that do exist in the Bill.

I'll have a lot more to say on this legislation next week, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

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

**Mr. Prebble:** — I'm sorry, I should just say, Mr. Speaker, that I just adjourn the debate. Thank you.

Debate adjourned.

(1100)

**Bill No. 8 — An Act to Promote the Growth and Development of Children and to Support the Provision of Child Care Services to Saskatchewan Families**

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me pleasure to speak to second reading of this Bill which is an Act with respect to child care.

The situation that we have here, Mr. Speaker, is that Saskatchewan does not have and has never had a child care Act, and that the child care that we do have in Saskatchewan was operated and is operated under regulations under The Family Services Act.

Up until this time, Mr. Speaker, no government has seen fit to actually pass a child care Act. So what we have now, Mr. Speaker, is an initiative by the federal government to provide for a national child care strategy. And in order to enact the national child care strategy proposed by Ottawa, and in order for Saskatchewan to deliver a better and improved child care system, we are introducing The Child Care Act today.

It is the opinion of the government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the existing programs permit insufficient options for child care in Saskatchewan. Now fortunately the regulations, as established by the former government, could be changed and are broad enough so that this government could introduce family child care homes to deliver smaller units, to give parents a choice in child care.

It is the intention of this Act, Mr. Speaker, to continue with the existing child care facilities and build upon that base. What will be done under this Act, Mr. Speaker, is that we will continue to encourage parent-owned and -operated child care facilities in Saskatchewan. And if the national child care Act comes to pass, they will be eligible for capital funding of up to 75 per cent.

In addition we have introduced, as a government, family child care homes which provide for smaller units for those parents who wish in urban areas to have their child cared for in a home environment, rather than in an institutional environment. These family child care homes, Mr. Speaker, are also legitimized in this Act and will assist in rural child care, so that we can deliver child care units in sizes as they are demanded in smaller communities throughout Saskatchewan.

In many ways this Act, Mr. Speaker, will continue and legitimize the processes that this government has started under the regulations as they have existed. The Act will enhance flexibility to develop different types of child care facilities in Saskatchewan to meet the unique needs of infant child care, rural child care, and child care for teen parents.

We have started this process even prior to the introduction of the Act, and have developed an additional teen parent centre in Saskatoon at Mount Royal Collegiate where teenage parents can continue with their high school education. We have also improved the funding, and this Act will incorporate the Balfour child care in Regina so that we will have in Regina and in Saskatoon a centre for the education of parents who have children, and these parents are high school students.

This Act will continue to focus on parent child care and child care centres operated by parent boards of directors. As indicated earlier, should the national child care Act come to pass, which unfortunately was not supported by the members of the party opposite when it was passed

through the legislature in Ottawa in the House of Commons . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The members opposite interrupt and say that they were opposed to the national child care Act; I agree that they admit their opposition to the national child care Act. I am pleased that they admit that opposition, but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that this Act that we are introducing in the legislature today will have the province of Saskatchewan co-operate with the federal government.

I know the members opposite are not interested in co-operation. They are shouting nasties from the other side of the House. I am used to that, Mr. Speaker. I am intent as the minister, and this government is intent, to do what is proper in assisting to the people of Saskatchewan, despite the opposition being opposed to things from their seats or standing in opposition.

This Act . . . the members opposite are concerned about this Act because they have their own vested interests and they want to only protect their vested interests but they do not wish, as this Act will do, to give parents a choice in the type of child care they will have.

This Act will continue . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, I might say to the members opposite that they are shouting from their seats, but I cannot hear their questions so it's rather difficult for me to answer their questions if they shout from their seats. The members opposite will be given time in a few minutes to stand in their place and speak on the record, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, are here before the people introducing improvement for families, improvement in child care, and I cannot see why the members opposite insist on interrupting while these improvements are being explained.

What this Bill does, Mr. Speaker, is permits certain things that are new to Saskatchewan but are very common to Canada. This Bill will permit for the operation of commercial child care services. This commercial provision will have a limit that no one owner may own more than two centres. The intention of this provision, Mr. Speaker, is to limit the operation of any child care chains in the province of Saskatchewan. And if this province were ever to have a child care chain, it would be limited to two facilities.

The members opposite have no respect, Mr. Speaker, for the individual choices and wishes of individual citizens and people. And I hear the members opposite criticizing anyone operating a child care as a business to take care of children. I say to the members opposite that they should have nothing to fear from competition in the provision of child care, that parents will choose the type of child care that they believe is best for their children.

And when the members opposite shout from their seats, they do a disservice to the parents of Saskatchewan. They insult the parents of Saskatchewan because they are suggesting that the parents of Saskatchewan are not smart enough to decide what's best for their own children.

This Bill will allow the parents of Saskatchewan to choose

the child care that they wish for their children. And the members opposite insult the parents of Saskatchewan by saying that no — the members opposite, the members of the socialist party of Saskatchewan say only they know what is good for children — the parents in this province do not know what's good for children.

The government, Mr. Speaker, cannot accept that kind of an attitude. The Government of Saskatchewan and this Bill does not accept that only socialists know what's best for our children. Our premise is that parents of Saskatchewan will decide what is best for their children.

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

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Mr. Speaker, this Bill respects parents, and parents will have choice. They will have the choice of a parent-operated child care. They'll have the choice of a child care operated by other individuals in which they do not have to actually operate but can purchase the services that are allowed under the national child care Act. This Bill allows for infant child care. It will be broad enough to allow for 24-hour child care.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite respect only ideology and do not respect the wishes of the people of Saskatchewan as reflected in the choices that parents will be allowed to make. The members opposite, who speak continuously of freedom — the freedom of choice, the freedom for the citizens to choose what is best for them — say that we should not allow parents to choose child care for their children.

Mr. Speaker, that is what is historic about this Bill. First of all, for the first time ever we will have a child care Act that will not be dictated by the cabinet Table. And secondly, for the first time ever, the parents of Saskatchewan will have a choice in the child care they seek for their children.

This Act, Mr. Speaker, will require all child care centres to be licensed, and these licences will be enforced. This Act will require that family child care homes be licensed where the provider chooses, but all licensed and unlicensed facilities cannot provide child care services to more than eight children. We have to draw a distinction here between baby-sitting and child care services. It is not the intention of the Government of Saskatchewan to interfere and regulate in the choices that parents have made with respect to hiring baby-sitters for their children.

This Act will regulate child care centres but will not go into the homes of families to regulate people up and down the streets and rural areas of Saskatchewan, doing baby-sitting services. The government will not intervene with those types of arrangements.

So I want it made perfectly clear that this is a child care Act and not a baby-sitting Act, and that we will not regulate baby-sitting in this Act, but we will regulate child care. And we will provide for the licensing of child care but we will not interfere in what parents are doing with respect to the hiring of their own baby-sitters.

In this Act, Mr. Speaker, licensed family child care home providers will have to comply with all standards set out in

the regulations of this Act, and when they are licensed, the parents or the child care will be eligible for the subsidies where the income of the parent warrants.

This Act is not only an Act that provides for rules and regulation and allows for child care, this Act also makes provisions for the subsidization of child care which, I might say, Mr. Speaker, to date 80 per cent of subsidized child care spaces are being used by single parents. And the emphasis in this Act will be to assist those parents who need assistance in child care and to allow those parents who can afford to pay for their own child care to make their own choices and purchase the service that they desire.

This Act also provides for powers of investigation to investigate alleged contradictions of the Act. And we have in the past, and we will under this Act cancel licences where we find that child care is not being properly provided.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, this Act maximizes Saskatchewan's opportunity to take advantage of the national child care strategy. And we feel confident that the federal government, now that the election has been won, will proceed with a national child care strategy despite the objections of the NDP in Ottawa; that this national child care strategy will be implemented and Saskatchewan will have the legislation and the programs to co-operate with the federal system.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, that this Act is an outline to provide legislation to allow the flexibility to give the parents of Saskatchewan the type of child care that they wish to have. And therefore it is my pleasure to move second reading of Saskatchewan's first Child Care Act.

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

**Mr. Prebble:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to serve notice to the Minister of Social Services that this legislation for profit commercial child care in the province of Saskatchewan is not in the best interests of Saskatchewan children, not in the best interests of Saskatchewan families, is a blatant attempt to privatize child care in the province of Saskatchewan, and will be fought by members of the opposition every stitch of the way, Mr. Deputy Speaker — every stitch of the way.

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

**Mr. Prebble:** — And I want to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to examine the state of day care in this province as a result of the policies that this government has pursued over the last seven years, that now paves the way for this Bill. And I'll just take a moment to do that, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, because of this government's policies we've seen a chronic shortage of day-care spaces in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. In terms of available day-care spaces, less than seven per cent of the children of women who are employed in the province of Saskatchewan — children under 12 — can be accommodated by the licensed day-care spaces that are presently in place in this province, which means that

everybody else who has child care needs, needs to go to a non-licensed space.

And this government, Mr. Speaker, has intentionally underfunded day care in this province and has consistently refused to open new spaces in this province, Mr. Speaker. And when they do announce new spaces, they're primarily announcements that have tended to fill closures in the day-care system over previous years. And I will elaborate on that when I address this Bill further next week, Mr. Speaker.

But the second point I'd like to make in terms of the crisis in day care that this government has perpetrated in Saskatchewan, is that for the last seven years there has been a freeze on the subsidies that are available to parents who are sending children to day-care centres or family day-care homes in the province of Saskatchewan.

(1115)

We've had a seven-year freeze, Mr. Speaker. In 1981, when this government on this side of the House was still in office, we had a subsidy with a maximum of \$235 a month when the average day-care centre in Saskatchewan was charging in the range of 250 to \$260 a month in fees. Today, Mr. Speaker, that maximum subsidy is still at \$235 a month. But what we have instead, is fees that average between 350 and \$360 a month in the cities and about \$320 a month in rural Saskatchewan. And the result, Mr. Speaker, is that low-income families have been having to pay in excess of \$120 per month, per child, for day-care services. If you've got three children in day care and you're on minimum wage, you're having \$360 a month taken out of your salary cheque, even if you're on maximum subsidy.

Now that, Mr. Speaker, that situation of the seven-year freeze on day-care subsidies has resulted in a lot of parents, low-income parents, not being able to afford the non-profit day-care centres or the family day-care homes any more in this province.

And a third thing has happened, Mr. Speaker, as a result of the subsidy freeze, and that is that wages in day-care centres have become abysmally low. Day-care workers are paid on average in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 30 per cent less than the people who care for animals at places like the forestry farms and other centres in the province of Saskatchewan. It's a disgraceful situation, and it's a situation that this government has brought on as a result of its freeze in grants and freeze in subsidies.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, this government has intentionally created a situation in which non-profit centres have been underfunded. Non-profit centres have not been able to meet the needs of many families in the province of Saskatchewan.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, with the seven-year freeze in funding, almost all middle-income families in this province have been ineligible any more for any assistance from this government. In 1981 a middle-income earner could get assistance from this government, from our government, if they needed help in the area of day care. This government has provided them

with no assistance, Mr. Speaker, because of the seven-year freeze. And therefore all middle-income families have become ineligible for any assistance for day care in this province.

And that, Mr. Speaker, has set the stage for the door to be opened to for profit commercial day care in this province. And so I want to turn to the Bill for a minute and make three or four points.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, as the minister has admitted, this Bill permits for profit commercial day care in this province. It permits day-care chains from the United States and from provinces like Ontario to move into this province and set up operations. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, it permits franchising of day care in this province.

The Minister of Social Services says, oh yes, a day-care chain will be allowed to come in, but will only be allowed to set up two commercial centres in this province. But what he doesn't tell us, Mr. Speaker, is that the door will be wide open to franchising of day care for commercial chains in this province. And that is unacceptable, I believe, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Prebble:** — And, Mr. Speaker, this Bill will allow those commercial chains and those franchised centres to receive grants and subsidies in the same way that the non-profit centres do.

But, Mr. Speaker, the minister's agenda is even worse than I've suggested today, because in this legislation, and specifically in section 22 of this Bill, the Minister of Social Services is giving himself the right to set restrictions on the number of children in a non-profit centre, the number of children in a non-profit centre whose parents will be eligible for day-care subsidies.

And, Mr. Speaker, his agenda is very clear. I say that this Minister of Social Services plans to restrict the amount of subsidy that can go to any non-profit centre. And he plans to take some of that money, Mr. Speaker, and he plans to give it to the commercial centres of this province. We're not going to see a major increase in the day-care budget. We're not going to see a major increase in the day-care budget. We are going to see, Mr. Speaker, a shifting of the day-care budget from the non-profit centres to the for-profit commercial centres in the province of Saskatchewan. And I say shame to the Minister of Social Services that he would ever do that — and he's doing it at the expense of the children of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a couple of other comments on this Bill before I adjourn the debate, and that is, Mr. Speaker, that I think the number one issue in this debate is over the question of quality of day care in the province of Saskatchewan. The issue is quality and what the best method of providing quality day care is.

And our position is that commercial for-profit child care will not be the best vehicle for providing quality day care in the province of Saskatchewan. First of all, Mr. Speaker,

research across this country shows that the first premise to quality day care anywhere is parent involvement, parental support, support of parental values in the day-care centre.

And the key difference, Mr. Speaker, between the model of day care that this Minister of Social Services supports and the model that we support, is that we believe, Mr. Speaker, that a day-care facility that doesn't provide for parents to have some control over the way that day care is run is not a day care that will provide the best quality of care for children in the province of Saskatchewan. And that's a key philosophical difference, Mr. Speaker.

This minister is eroding parental control. He's making a provision for parent advisory boards to the commercial centres, but that is not the same as a parent being able to walk into a day care and know, Mr. Speaker, that they have a say in the way that that day care is run. And that's the number one agenda of this government, is to do away with the opportunity for parents to control their day-care facilities in this province.

Mr. Speaker, another key issue in this Bill is that the record of the commercial centres in lobbying for weaker day-care regulations, in lobbying against improvements in day-care regulations, Mr. Speaker, is very clear. All you have to do is look at the situation in Ontario, the situation in the United States, and you'll see that the consistent record, Mr. Speaker, is that the commercial for-profit day-care centres have lobbied against improved regulations by government in the day-care field.

And it will be very interesting, Mr. Speaker, to see whether this government, when it writes the regulations, is prepared to strengthen the regulations with respect to things like child-staff ratios in this province. Because, Mr. Speaker, the non-profit centres have consistently operated above the minimum regulations in this province. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that we'll see that the commercial centres will lobby against improved regulations and will operate only barely to meet the regulations that are now in place. And those regulations are the key to quality day care in the province of Saskatchewan.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, with respect to commercial day care, I want to say that we on this side of the House believe that the profits that will be made from the commercial centres will be directly at the expense of quality of care at those centres. They'll be, Mr. Speaker, at the expense of decent staff salaries for day-care workers. That's the first thing they'll be at the expense of, and if you can't pay your staff a decent wage, then you can't get decent quality child care in a centre. So the first thing that profit will do is it will erode the salaries of day-care workers in the province of Saskatchewan which are already at the poverty line.

And second, Mr. Speaker, we believe that for-profit commercial centres will also erode the other services that are available to children in those centres unless those centres charge higher fees. Fewer of the commercial centres will have things like hot lunch meal programs for children, Mr. Speaker, because the money will be taken from meals for children and it will go into profit for those

commercial centres instead. And if they do have those kind of services, it will only be as a result of higher fees for parents that send their children to those centres.

So in summary, Mr. Speaker, and in conclusion, what this Minister of Social Services has done is created a crisis in day care in the province of Saskatchewan, frozen funding to day care for seven years, opened the door, created a chronic shortage of spaces in this province, and therefore created an opening, because of the chronic shortage of spaces and the crisis in day care, for the profit commercial sector to come into the day care field in this province.

I don't hear, Mr. Speaker, parents in Saskatchewan crying out for for profit commercial day care. What I hear them calling for is more day care spaces and better quality day care and control over the day care facilities that they run. And the Minister of Social Services is providing them with none of that. His only agenda in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to provide more spaces for day care without any additional cost to the Government of Saskatchewan.

We say that that's not the way to provide quality day care in the province of Saskatchewan. We will oppose this legislation every step of the way.

I will adjourn the debate at this point in time and pick it up next week, Mr. Speaker.

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

Debate adjourned.

(1130)

### **Bill No. 9 — An Act respecting Adoption**

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It gives me pleasure today to speak to second reading on the reintroduction of an adoption Act. I recall that up until the election of the NDP government in 1972, Saskatchewan had an adoption Act, and that when the NDP government was elected . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — In '71.

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — And I'm corrected, in 1971 — late 1971, I say to the members opposite . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — No. It was early.

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Early? All right. Some of us haven't been here that long that we recall 1971. Members opposite, some of them have been here so long that they know all of the history of Saskatchewan, but I stand to be corrected.

In 1971 the election of the NDP government saw the 1972 Family Services Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which put adoption into The Family Services Act. And the first problem was that you couldn't find the adoption Act or the adoption laws.

It has come time now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to revise the adoption laws, and it gives me pleasure to re-enact an adoption Act so that anyone who wants to find the law on

adoption can look at The Adoption Act.

This Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, recognizes the best interests of children regarding the placement of children and the making of adoption orders. And I must emphasize, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this Act is for the benefit of children and not the adopting parents or the natural parents; that the first criteria is what's best for the child.

Secondly, this Act will make provisions to license and regulate adoption agencies. We have seen the introduction of one adoption agency as a pilot project in Saskatchewan — Saskatoon Christian Counselling (Services), and I have made it clear that it is the intention of this government to establish no more than two adopting agencies in Saskatchewan. In addition, this Act will continue government adoptions in Saskatchewan.

This Act will recognize for the first time the rights of birth fathers. And I might say that it is the position of this government that we will, over the next two years, encourage and pass laws to make birth fathers more responsible for their children. But in exchange for that responsibility of birth fathers, we are also going to give them the rights to have their paternity rights recognized with respect to adoption, and the consent of the birth father will be taken into account under this Act when adoptions are made.

I might say, of course, that there are provisions in this Act that you have to of course locate the birth father, but where the birth father shows an interest in his child, that birth father will have rights with respect to adoption and may be considered for adoption.

This Act will have a stipulation with respect to consent to adoption, and the provisions with respect to when a birth mother can give consent to adopt out her child, which is usually an infant, will be changed to be more consistent with other parts of Canada and with what is practical.

No birth mother will be allowed to consent to an adoption unless her child is at least three days old. The former law had no such limitation. But we will make a change. The current provision says that the mother has 30 days to revoke her consent, and this leaves the situation in limbo with respect to adoption.

To be consistent with other provinces and what is practical, this law will propose that birth parents have 14 days in which to revoke their consent to adoption, but no consent will be allowed to be taken until three days after the child is born, so that the mother will have an opportunity to see the child, to develop some affinity to the child, before the mother considers giving up the child for adoption. Now this will be, of course, the choice of the mother, but there will be at least three days before any consent can be given.

This Act will also, Mr. Speaker, require independent legal advice for all adoptive birth parents, so that the consent to adopt one's child will not be obtained without full knowledge of the legal rights of the parent. It is not the intention of the Government of Saskatchewan to either promote or allow the taking of children from their natural

parent for the purposes of adoption. We want the natural parent to give this serious topic due consideration and fully understand the law before they consent to the adoption of their child, which after 14 days will become a permanent matter.

This Act will also require independent . . . excuse me, this Act will also permit provision of some services by qualified non-departmental social workers and other professionals. Now members opposite today have referred to agencies who provide social work services in Saskatchewan now under contract to the Department of Social Services. This Act will make it legal for agencies under contract to do counselling with respect to adoption and to do preparatory work prior to the consent to adoption, because every family has to be checked to see if that family is suitable to raise the proposed child.

I might say that this Act, Mr. Speaker, will give greater protection to adoptive children with respect to the quality of the parents they will receive than to natural children who have no choice as to who their parents will be. We do not, and I believe will never have any requirement that natural parents qualify as parents before they have children. But adoptive parents have to qualify as parents before they can adopt a child. So as much as the state can possibly ensure, every child that is adopted will go into a good family.

This Act will provide for the possibility of contract agencies ensuring that these families are adequate. This Act will also clarify various types of adoption. We will continue with adoptions that we call Crown ward adoptions, where a child becomes a ward of the province of Saskatchewan and it turns out that the child cannot go back to live with the parents. And at some stage it is our desire to have that child adopted out under a Crown, the state, ward adoption.

As I indicated earlier, this Act will also provide for agency adoptions, and it is the intention of this government to limit those agencies to two in Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member from Regina Victoria has a speech that he's making from his seat, but I say to the member from Regina Victoria that he will have opportunity to stand up and speak on this Bill in about five minutes. The member from Regina Victoria seems to be infuriated, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest that he settle down and wait his turn.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, this Act will also allow for independent adoption. This is a situation where the parents choose not to, where the parents choose not to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, but with the interruptions it's difficult to lay out to the citizens of Saskatchewan the exact contents of the Bill.

But I say that independent adoptions will continue to be allowed where the parents choose to adopt out their children without the assistance of the Government of Saskatchewan, where they arrange with someone they know to adopt a child to that person. This of course, Mr. Speaker, will all have to go through the court system and have the approval of the courts. But this is a practice that has continued in Saskatchewan for approximately the entire length of the history of this province and will be

continued.

We will, for the first time ever, allow provision for step-parent adoption. Now there have been step-parent adoptions in Saskatchewan before, but this Act will streamline and enhance the provisions for step-parents to adopt children. Unfortunately, we have more and more situations where, as a result of broken families, we have new families created. And we believe that these new families should be able to adopt children where the new spouse is prepared to take that child in, and this will facilitate that kind of a situation.

This Act will also continue the departmental assistance for applicants who wish to adopt a child from a foreign country. This will be referred to as international adoption. It will make provision to allow for the courts to give prior approval to recognize a foreign simple adoption order for all legal purposes in Saskatchewan.

Now what we say here is that the courts in Saskatchewan, if satisfied that a legal, proper adoption can be arranged in a foreign country to bring to Canada a child that can be raised as a Canadian and have all the benefits and opportunities of immigrating to Canada into a family, this Act will allow international adoptions and allow the court to sanction them if the court is satisfied that the adoption in the foreign country is legal.

We do not sanction, or will we ever permit, the importation of children into Canada unless they are legally adopted in the country of origin. But it is the opinion of this minister that we should not discourage infants from immigrating to Canada where they can be raised as happy, healthy Canadian citizens when they would have lived in poverty, unwanted in the country that they came from.

And so we encourage international adoptions. But this Act will set out rules so that people in other countries will not be taken advantage of, so that there will be no dealing in babies from other countries. This Act will allow international adoptions with law and order. And the Government of Canada has an international adoption desk right now, and this Bill will allow the Government of Saskatchewan to co-operate with the Government of Canada to allow for the orderly immigration of children into Canadian and Saskatchewan families.

This Bill provides also for the open adoption concept which has been started in Saskatchewan, and I recall a year ago the members opposite were adamantly opposed to open adoptions in Saskatchewan and adamantly opposed to the Saskatoon Christian Counselling (Services) contracting agency trying a pilot project in open adoption. By open adoption they have a system where, if the mother wants to participate in the choosing of parents, she may. And if parents wish . . . adoptive parents wish to adopt where they know that the mother will have chosen them and the mother will interview them as prospective parents, this will be allowed under this Act.

I might say that the pilot project, Mr. Speaker, has gone so well that in the last 15 months Saskatoon Christian Counselling (Services) has placed 31 children while the

province of Saskatchewan has only had approximately 61 children available for adoption. So we can see that more children have become available for adoption through the agreement of the birth mother and the adoptive parents.

And up until the time that I stand here and give this speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not had brought to my attention any problems with open adoption at Saskatoon Christian Counselling (Services) — not that I can recall any major problem. I recall objection from the members opposite. I recall some objection from people on philosophical grounds. I recall some concern from some people. But of the 31 cases, as I speak today, I know of no problems, and what we have is happy birth mothers and happy adoptive parents and, hopefully, 31 children that will find happiness in the province of Saskatchewan with a good family.

And I might say, Mr. Speaker, that one of the reasons that we tried open adoption was to give birth mothers an option of saying, yes, I will go through pregnancy and have this child, but I need the assurance that the family it's going to will take proper care of it. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more important than having the birth mother feeling comfortable and satisfied that she has helped find a good home for her child. I believe there is nothing more comforting for that mother.

And now, as Minister of Social Services, this Act . . . we have opened up the Act in the past few years to allow birth mothers from many years ago to follow through and find their children. It tells me, Mr. Speaker, that birth mothers, even though they give up their children, have an attachment for that child, they still care about that child, and they want to see how that child is doing. Through open adoption, now 31 birth mothers will be able to work in co-operation with the adoptive parents to see how their child has turned out, rather than go through all of their lives not knowing what happened to their child.

(1145)

And a year ago, Mr. Speaker, this government was soundly criticized by the members opposite for doing something of this nature. And it's unbelievable that the members opposite, who have always considered themselves to be radicals and for change, would resist positive change when it is brought before them. This Act will continue the open adoption concept.

And this . . . I announce with the introduction of this Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Government of Saskatchewan, through the Department of Social Services, will also give parents, both birth parents and adoptive parents, the option to have open adoption if they so choose. And this will be delivered through the Department of Social Services through the means of the passing of this Act and through the policies of our department. So this government, through this adoption Act, will again give parents, either natural or adoptive parents, the choice to make decisions for themselves rather than have the government set stringent rules saying, you as a parent cannot make decisions for your child.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, this Act will provide for the government to have the ability to charge for fees in adoptive services where, in the opinion of the government through its regulatory powers, these services are not open to the public as a whole but are special services to individual parents or children who can afford to pay for that service.

As I indicated earlier, this government has opened up the adoption records to parents and children so that they can trace their ancestry either for matters of interest, or matters of follow-through, just with respect to the human feeling and needs to want to follow through your offspring and see what has happened to them, and even assist them 30 or 40 years later if they would need some assistance.

These fees, again, have been criticized because the members opposite believe everything should be free. And they also believe that we should be free from paying of taxes. And if you are free from the paying of taxes and everything is free, Mr. Speaker, what you get is nothing — for free you get nothing.

This Act provides that the Minister of Social Services has the power to waive fees where people cannot afford to pay fees. Recently it has come to my attention that there are people objecting in the media this very day to the paying of fees. And it seems very unusual to me, Mr. Speaker, that people who can afford to pay the fees refuse to pay for a service that's being provided to them that the former government never, ever provided. So as soon as this government makes moves that you could call progressive, that you could call even radical, but they are positive moves to allow people to trace their parents, then all of a sudden, because the members opposite didn't have the foresight to allow people to have this information, they did not charge anything because they did nothing.

This government has done something, and we're allowing parents of children to trace their relatives, but we are saying that you should pay a modest fee where you can afford to pay it. And members opposite say, no, that should be free.

This Bill provides, Mr. Speaker, for fees where people can afford to pay. These are not fees for services that the public as a whole needs and has access to, but fees for services where there is a special interest involved. The tracing of my ancestors is of special interest to me, and I submit that if a person who can afford to pay a fee of \$80, refuses to pay \$80, that person is not very serious in knowing about their ancestors or the information. And why should the taxpayers of Saskatchewan satisfy the curiosity of people with money in their pockets simply because the people with money in their pockets don't think it's worth anything to them to find out what the information is?

I agree that people who cannot afford to get this information should not be charged. This Bill provides that the minister can waive that fee. As minister, I have waived that fee in many cases, but I can say that the policy of this government is not that people do not pay fees because they don't want to pay fees. People who can afford to pay for the service they want will have to pay for it. People

who cannot afford to pay for it will have the taxpayers pay for it. And I believe that is a reasonable way of running a government.

With respect to fines and penalties under this Act, Mr. Speaker, this government will not tolerate people dealing in babies, selling babies, or making commissions in the trade of babies. And for that reason, this government in this Bill will double the fine for infractions under this Act from a maximum of \$5,000 to a maximum of \$10,000, and we will double the maximum incarceration to one year. We will not tolerate people trying to profit from the sale of babies, and this Act will be strengthened to prevent that.

But, Mr. Speaker, we will allow parents a choice in the form of adoption that they can have. We will allow parents a choice in the means of delivery of adoption. We will allow people to provide services and, where necessary, the province will pay the cost of these services; and where the benefit is strictly to the parent as an individual citizen, we may charge a modest fee. But certainly, a modest fee charged by the province, or a cost recovery fee by a contracting agency, is not engaging in the business of the sale of babies, which we will not tolerate, Mr. Speaker.

So therefore it gives me pleasure to enact and bring before this Assembly an adoption Act that allows for parental choice, that allows for flexibility. And I cannot see, Mr. Speaker, how the opposite party, who always passes resolutions in favour of choice, can be opposed to choice for parents in these instances. So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of An Act respecting Adoption.

**Mr. Prebble:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, there are two or three points I'd like to comment on with respect to this Bill. First of all, there are some positive things in this Bill. I think probably its major strength is that it requires the courts to determine the best interests of the child when placing a child for adoption, Mr. Speaker. And those best interests are very specifically and, I think, quite well spelled out in this Bill. We support that move.

Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about the question of providing parents with a choice. And in so far as he talks about that choice being between an open adoption system and the traditional system that we've been used to, we have no problem with that on this side of the House. Contrary to what the minister said in his speech, Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House don't have a problem with the principle of open adoption where both the birth parents and the adoptive parents are in agreement with that process. We have no problem with that process, Mr. Speaker.

What we have a problem with, is the Minister of Social Services' proposal that the large bulk of infant adoption work in the province of Saskatchewan should not be done any more by the Department of Social Services but should be taken away from the Department of Social Services and instead should be put in the hands of private agencies, Mr. Speaker. That is the central issue in this Bill, and it is on that issue that we take opposition to the

legislation, and not on the basis of many of the other positive measures in the Bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in effect, what we have here is another case of privatization, this time privatization with respect to adoption services, particularly infant adoption services in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we had a problem with respect to a shortage of perspective adoptive parents in this province, I could see why there might be a role for a non-profit agency becoming involved in helping the government to find perspective adoptive parents.

And in so far as we look at native adoptions and the shortage of native adoptive parents — adoptive parents of native origin — there may well be a role for a non-profit agency to become involved in working with the government to seek out adoptive parents of native origin. And I think we'd be prepared to look quite positively at that.

But with respect to the government's agenda, Mr. Speaker, which is essentially to establish two or three private agencies in the province of Saskatchewan to, in effect, run infant adoption services in this province and take that service out of the Department of Social Services, we fail to see, Mr. Speaker, how that will be in either the best interests of the adoptive parents, the birth parents, or the children concerned. And I want to spend just two or three minutes explaining why I believe that to be the case, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services himself has acknowledged that these private agencies will be charging fees. First of all, by way of the legislation, there will be a charge for the legal services that both the birth parent and the adoptive parent require before the adoption order can be completed. And those services will be charged for, Mr. Speaker, and in the past the Department of Social Services has provided legal services free of charge. Now what the Minister of Social Services is proposing is that the adoptive parent or the birth parent pay for those legal charges themselves, Mr. Speaker.

Second, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services has acknowledged that the agencies themselves will likely have to charge fees. It's very clear that he does not intend to fully fund these agencies in the long term, Mr. Speaker, and therefore these agencies will need to charge parents fees to supplement any funding that they get from the Department of Social Services. And those fees, between the legal fees and the agency fees, we could easily be talking about charges in the range of hundreds of dollars — several hundreds of dollars, Mr. Speaker.

Now I believe, and members on this side of the House believe, Mr. Speaker, that it should be a basic principle in this province that adoptions are carried out on the basis of the family's fitness to adopt a child, whether they will provide a good home for that child, and should have nothing to do with whether or not that family has the ability to pay the fees in order to adopt the child. So we stand four-square against fees for adoption. We're against legal fees for adoption. We're against agency fees for adoptions, Mr. Speaker.



The second point and the final point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this Bill and with respect to private agencies, is that we fear that the private agencies will create an inequitable system in this province with respect to adoptions and waiting lists for adoptions, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister is talking about establishing two or three private agencies in this province. Clearly those private agencies will be in the urban centres. They'll likely be located in Regina and Saskatoon. Right now, Mr. Speaker, someone who wants to go on the waiting list to adopt an infant child in this province can walk into the Social Services office in La Ronge or in Swift Current or in Prince Albert or in a remote area of rural Saskatchewan, can go to their nearest local office, and they can be placed on the waiting list to adopt an infant child from that local office of the Department of Social Services.

Now that same prospective adoptive parent will have to travel to Saskatoon or Regina to be put on the waiting list, Mr. Speaker. It may be months before they find out where the private adoption agency is, how they can get on the waiting list. Under the system that the Minister of Social Services is proposing to set up, people in northern Saskatchewan and people in rural Saskatchewan will not have equal access to adoption services as will people in Saskatoon and Regina. And I predict that the large number of people at the top of the waiting lists of these private agencies will be from Regina and Saskatoon, and that is unfair to the people of Saskatchewan as a whole, Mr. Speaker.

Those are two of our major objections to this Bill. I'll be outlining a number of other objections when I speak on the Bill again next week, and at this point, Mr. Speaker, I will move to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

(1200)

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Taylor that Bill No. 1 — An Act to establish the Public Participation Program be now read a second time.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to be back in this debate. I left off yesterday, Mr. Speaker, saying that we wanted to review the words of the minister yesterday when he introduced the Bill, and we have done that. And I must say that we didn't miss anything when we said it was very short and didn't deal with privatization in any meaningful way.

I want to take some time to review the remarks that I made yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and then talk about some of the problems that we see with the Bill directly.

I want to say again that the minister's speech was very vague and outlined very little about what privatization will do to the province of Saskatchewan, or in fact what it

has done in the past five or six years since the privatization process has been in place here in the province.

I say to you that, as well, the credibility of the government is at stake in privatization because they keep redefining where privatization makes sense. A year ago, the Premier of the province said that none of the utilities, particularly SaskPower would not be privatized. He gave that commitment to the people of the province. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure you're aware, he broke his word and trust to the people of the province. I would use stronger language, if it were allowed in the House, Mr. Speaker, but it was a falsehood when the Premier said that he would not privatize the utilities and SaskPower.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I want to quote to you from November 14 of 1987, in a story carried in the *Leader-Post* where the Premier is quoted as saying . . . when asked what corporations could be sold, the Premier said:

The only ones not being considered are SaskPower, the utility portions of SaskTel, and the automobile accident insurance fund which is administered by SGI.

That's a commitment; that is a commitment that he gave, not only to the people of the province but to the press. And if Mr. Eisler is in the gallery, I'm sure he knows that he was misled by the Premier, because we have the Premier a short few months later, splitting off a section of SaskPower and renaming it SaskEnergy and then privatizing it, and trying to make the people believe — the farmers who will have to pay higher rates, and the home owners who will have to pay higher rates as a result — believe that it's no longer a utility.

What I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that in their own report in 1987, and I quote:

The corporation began operating the natural gas utility in 1952 and by the end of 1984, 410 cities and towns and villages were being served.

Their own report refers to it in 1987 as a public utility. And now they're trying to, because the politics dictates them to do it, to redefine it as no utility. This, after they've lined the pockets of many of their friends by selling off the gas fields; this, they intend to fill their pockets further by getting rid of the natural gas side of SaskPower.

Mr. Speaker, SaskPower by any other name — call it what you want — is still SaskPower. It's still a utility. It's still a utility that was built by the people of the province to provide a service to them at a very reasonable rate, and that's why gas and electrical charges in this province have been the lowest in Canada, bar none — the lowest in Canada.

That's why in a privatized form SaskPower, the energy side, will have to increase rates. There's no other way of looking at it because if you're going to allow for profits on shares, profits to out-of-province companies, then rates

have to go up. There's no other way to look at it.

And every person in this province who will be getting power bills, gas bills, and see the increase going up, will have to say that this government has made a mistake, that they've gone too far. I say here, Mr. Speaker, there's no argument here that there is a role to play in this province by the private sector. The private sector flourished in the 1970s under a New Democratic government.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — In fact, Mr. Speaker, investment in the province in the last three or four years of our government — '79, '80, '81 — total investment was right around \$4 billion or over during that time period. That has in fact gone down. Private sector investment in this province is not going up under the Conservative government . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Going under, you're right.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, it's a good point, going under is right. If you look at the number of foreclosures in this province on small business, that has increased from about 400 in 1981 to over 1,200 in the last year we have the numbers, in 1987; 1,200 bankruptcies — three times as many bankruptcies under this free enterprise government as was the case under the New Democratic government which this government would have you believe is opposed to farmers and free enterprise. If the numbers simply don't dictate that there is any truth in that, then why would we expect there be truth in anything this government says?

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The record is clear that in almost every privatization that has gone on we have heard the words of the government, and the minister again today, promising last year we would not lose jobs by privatizing parts of SMDC, privatizing that corporation; and then today him standing in the House saying, well we didn't know that circumstances would change, and yes in fact, jobs are being lost as a result of privatization.

We saw privatization in the highways — 400 employees being laid off. We see it with the farm equity purchase program that will have out-of-province money buying up farm land and leasing it back to farms.

But the minister yesterday says, you don't have to worry, farmers, because we're going to give you jobs mowing the ditches of the highways. That's what we're going to do. You don't have to worry about losing your farm. Don't worry, the Premier says, about the fact that his corporation and his lawyers are foreclosing on over 1,000 farmers; has legal actions and foreclosures on over 1,000 farmers. That's no problem, no problem at all that his lawyers that he hires have people in court this very day, or actions before the courts this very day, forcing farm families off the land.

The minister of privatization says, don't worry, there's no problem there because we have another aspect of privatization that takes jobs away from people who are

mowing the roads and gives it to our farmers. I say this is a flawed economic development because the farmers don't want to mow the ditches. That's not what they're trained to do; that's not what they're experts at. What they want to do is grow wheat, which they did in the 1970s, and all the way back to the last time we had a Conservative government in the 1930s when that government did nothing to keep the farmers on the land, and at that time we had an exodus such that we haven't seen until this year.

But I say to you that it's a flawed economic strategy because it dictates that what was done by previous governments and their supporters over the last 50 years, the building of a province that was based on co-operation, a society that was built on private sector and public sector working together to create jobs, keep the unemployment rate low, has been thrown out the window. And I want to say very clearly that when we look at what is happening in the province, it's a sad case.

And I think of the Premier of this province as a — when he took over — a young man. I compare him to a young farmer taking over a farm that is fully paid for. The father has left him a large farm, money in the bank, some employees working for the farmer. And we have the Premier — or this young farmer — going away to university, let's say an American university.

He comes back with all sorts of bright ideas about what his father had done wrong on the farm. No concept that the father had built the farm over 50 years with his father. Everything's paid for; things are running along all right. And this young guy comes back to the farm — the Premier of the province comes back — he's got a degree, a doctorate in economics. He's going to tell everyone that what they have done for 50 years is wrong, on the farm.

So he brings in a concept of agriculture from a foreign land, a different place that doesn't fit the situation, and he starts implementing his program. Open for big business, he says. And that fails. And the economy starts going down, and the farmer starts losing money. And he starts borrowing more and more money to keep things flowing along because he wants to keep going to Hawaii in the winter the way his father was able to afford to do, and he wants to continue having parties with his friends.

And before you know it, the banks won't lend him any more money. And then he says, well what we have to do is another new initiative. We have to start selling some of the farm because we can't borrow any more money, so let's sell a quarter this year and a quarter next year. And that's what he does, and he starts selling off the assets.

And soon the farm is almost gone, a few assets left. And you have this now older, balding farmer who says to himself, what do I do to cover up all my mistakes? What do I do? How can I avoid the criticism of my neighbours who are now laughing at me? How do I avoid that the *Toronto Globe and Mail* is running cartoons where they have an outline of the province with a for sale sign in the middle. What does he say? Well, I'll throw a big party. I'll spend my last money on a big party. Celebrate! And maybe my neighbours won't notice, because I'll invite them in and we'll have drinks and we'll have a big party

with the last few dollars I have.

And his friends say to him, don't do that. You're in no position to have a big party. You're going broke. You have no money left. Take that money and wisely spend it to try to rebuild the province, or to rebuild your farm.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that is where we're at in this province, with privatization. This is no flashy new idea that the TV ads are showing, that somehow the province is vibrant and moving. There's not one single economic indicator that would prove that to be true.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Even today in the House, the Minister of Education tried to explain why the drop-out of high schools was 50 per cent higher than when he became the minister. And he listed out a litany of programs that he had introduced: NORTEP, SUNTEP, all these programs that he was bringing in to innovatively change education. The only thing he didn't say, they were all NDP programs. He didn't say that.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The only other thing that he didn't say, Mr. Speaker, and here again the trust factor, is the fact that he did not tell you that he had underfunded these programs and they were in large part due and responsible for young people not staying in school.

But when young people look for jobs, and look for jobs that are disappearing because of privatization, they have little hope, Mr. Speaker, in this province any more. That's why, of the 17 per cent of those young people under the age of 25 who are unemployed, many of them are leaving the province to look in Ontario, where there's a different government that may have ideas of how to stimulate the economy.

**An Hon. Member:** — Or British Columbia.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Or British Columbia; dare I say British Columbia, where there is some development going on, even more than there is here. Even that right-wing government has more ideas of how to keep people working.

But they're leaving this province at a rate of 6,000 people a month. That's a record. I looked back in the records to the last time we had massive out-migration. It was back in the 1930s when we had a previous Conservative government. Even at that time the record of 6,000 a month is not there.

Now if you look back to the 1970s when the population was growing — the members like to talk about this — but in 1976 the population grew by, not 1,000 or 2,000, but 14,000 people in 1976. People were coming to the province. They were coming home from Calgary, where they had gone to work in the late '60s, and they were coming back to run the farm. And I say it's sad to see young farmers, some of them not so young any more, being forced off the land by this government and lack of policies and its lack of standing up to the federal

government demanding those things that should be done in this province.

Now obviously not all of it's due to privatization. Not every job that is being lost and every farmer that's going out of business is a loss as a result of privatization. But the people of the province now know that there is a direct link, that there's a linkage between the Conservatives' idea of privatization which came in right after open for big business failed, that now they have two records to deal with — one, the first one, the new idea that big business was just going to come here and set up new businesses. That didn't work. Now we have a concept that we sell off all our assets and that big business comes and buys it up and they are going to prepare jobs for the people of the province.

(1215)

Well it's now proven that that isn't working either. Unemployment in this province, which ran around 3 and 4, and when we left office it was a little over 4 per cent, Mr. Speaker, has risen to over 9 per cent after five years of privatization. And these people say to you that privatization, Tory style, is working, and working well. I say to you there's no possible way that this lack of imagination, lack of creativity, the belief that 50 years of struggle and turmoil and toil are being thrown out the window and we're going to bring something from Maggie Thatcher's government and implement it in Saskatchewan, that it's going to work. This is a flawed idea of economic development. A flawed idea.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I say again, use the examples, use the examples. And the member from Weyburn talks about privatization, and I could talk about privatization, Tory style, even in his own town where people line their pockets, where people line their pockets at the expense of the taxpayers, but I'll talk about that another day. I'll talk about that another day.

I want to say that there are members of the Conservative Party . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — There are no examples.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Oh there are many examples. I could use the example of Moose Jaw, and my friend from Moose Jaw North will be referring to that later in the debate, where buildings are sold, where people . . . Buildings — now get this: buildings being sold to strong Conservative members; in fact, spouses of people who nominate Tory candidates being sold buildings much below the market value and then half of the building being leased back to the power corporation at a higher rate than they had been renting it before it was sold.

And the member from Weyburn says there's no examples. There's no examples. Yes, I tell you that every instance where we have these Tories filling their pockets we are going to be exposing as part of the privatization program of this government.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — But let's look at the biggest give-away of all. And I spent a few moments on it yesterday, but I want to go back to it, and that is the Weyerhaeuser — the jewel in the crown of the Tory privatization act of this province.

This is a company that these wizards, I say again, of economic development chose to sell when pulp was at its lowest level in the very cyclical market that everyone understands who has ever been involved in selling pulp. Now what did they do? They took a corporation that had been making money but, because of the drop in the pulp price, began losing some money. And they said, look, this pulp mill is losing money; we've got to sell it. And they did, and they sold it, and what happened to that corporation? What happened to that corporation? And the members shout from their seats — the member from Meadow Lake who, during the debate, during the debate . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — You were a joke to the industry.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well we'll see who's a joke to the industry when we get done. But I want to say to you that this corporation purchased an asset of this province which included the 7 million acres of forest land, a pulp mill, a chemical plant in Saskatoon, and a saw mill in Big River. And what did they pay for it? They promised that they would pay for this plant 248 million if they made a profit of over 14 per cent. Not \$1 down, not \$1 down, a guaranteed interest rate by the province of eight and a half per cent, and for that they got all of those assets.

All of the warning signals were there: the price of pulp had already started to go up when we were debating it in the House. Everyone predicted, Allan Blakeney predicted the price of pulp absolutely to the number of where it would go within the next year, and it's there now.

Why do you suppose the profit of Weyerhaeuser international went from 120 million in 1985 to over 500 million in 1987? There's a reason for that. Go to the people who run that plant today and ask them what they changed, what they changed within that pulp plant to make it productive. Did they change the people? No, they didn't; they didn't change the people. Did they change the equipment and buy new equipment and put into that plant? No, they didn't. Go and ask what has changed in that plant and why they're making enormous profits today, and they'll tell you, the only single reason is the price of pulp has gone up. That's the only reason.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And I say, in every other industry that they have privatized, they pick the very worst time to sell. They're talking about selling the potash corporation now, and how much are they valuing the potash mines at? Well the Premier of the province is saying something below \$1 billion; this is what he's saying he's going to sell it for. And that may have been what it was worth a year or two ago when the price of potash was lower than it is today, but the experts who know potash say the corporation is worth \$2 billion.

Well why would a government sell off an asset that's

worth 2 billion for 1 billion? These are the shrewd business people of Saskatchewan. And then we wonder why the deficit of the province has gone from 2.5 billion in the Crowns to over 12 billion, or close to 12 billion in total in this province.

At every turn we've made business deals that have been a disaster for the people of this province — have been a disaster. Unemployment rates have gone up. The debt has sky-rocketed. And what about services?

I want to say to you that the minister yesterday neglected to talk about the few of the privatizations that have taken place that I think the people of this province know about. The most interesting and debatable issue of privatization to this point has been the privatizing of the dental program. That's the one that most people know about and talk about. The one they want to talk about that is going to be in Bill form is privatizing SaskPower. That will be the big issue this year. But of the last privatizations that went on of the hundreds that have taken place, the dental program is the most talked about when I go around.

Well it's interesting that not one word — not one word — was mentioned by the minister when he talked about the advantages of privatization. The biggest issue in the province that people talk about when it comes to privatization was left out of the speech. Now why is that? Why did he do that? Well I'll tell you why he wouldn't do it is because it is so unpopular that this government is embarrassed about that privatization. They're embarrassed about it.

But are they going to stop privatizing health? Is that their thought? I mean, they are working with Oliver Letwin and people like that who come here from other places and talk to them behind closed doors about how to privatize. And Oliver Letwin will tell them that — and has told them, I understand — that the way they went about privatizing the dental plan was one of the worst examples that he has ever seen. He says: you don't do it that way. You don't do it that way. You got to be smoother. You got to con the people more. You got to work slower. Privatize some other things first and then work your way at health once you soften people up.

He says: you made a big mistake, now quit talking about it — and what you do is you run these flashy ads. You don't mention the dental plan. Don't ever mention that in those expensive ads that the taxpayers are paying for. Never mention, in your millions of dollars you're spending on advertising, anything about the dental plan. Don't do that because the people may forget your blunder and your stupidity when you went about and the way you did it.

And the member from Regina South knows full well that many of his constituents are telling him that, that you guys blundered. So the strategy of Oliver Letwin and the ad companies, the . . . Dome Advertising is saying, let's get about \$20 million together and we'll run these slick TV ads that talk about something that has no relevance to what the people are concerned about with privatization.

For one, don't mention the drug plan in your million dollar ad campaign, and for sure don't talk about

SaskPower being privatized. Don't talk about the big ones. And for sure, don't follow on the stupidity of the Premier when he talked about the potash mines being sold to the government of communist China, because that is very unpopular, very unpopular, especially in the key seats that we have to win next time.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The other thing we'll do, Mr. Speaker, the ad campaign says is find something that you can blame on the New Democratic Party — dig up some document from years ago that will embarrass the NDP. So they find a document, this brand-new document in a brown bag, and I've seen them around the building, trying to give it to the press — not this week, not last week, but since 1985 they've been trying to give it to the press. Schoenhals, you remember Schoenhals, the minister who was the minister privatizing Saskoil. If you read the *Hansard*, I think you might find this brilliant leak back in 1985 speeches given again.

**An Hon. Member:** — That's four years old.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — That's four years old now. And the press at that time were told about this very exciting, innovative idea the New Democratic Party had. This leak has been going on for four years. They pass it around to the press.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Then they say to . . . they can't get one of the press gallery to print a story on it — not one of the press would print it. Nobody. Well they find this character in Saskatoon, Paul Jackson, former speech-writer for the Premier . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — He's still speech writing for him.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — He's still speech writing for him, but he's actually employed by the *Star-Phoenix*. And he writes a report about this leaked document that he had for four years while he worked in the Premier's office that they couldn't sell to the legitimate press. I've seen them around the building, Mr. Speaker, handing . . . these brown packages laying all over the place. It's laughable, this document that is supposed to be a strategy for selling shares in Crown corporations by the New Democratic Party. I say to them, of course we had discussions about selling all sorts of things, because we were always defining the line where the private sector and public sector would be involved.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And I want to say to you that it was clear. The line was absolutely clear.

In terms of the utilities, SaskPower, SaskTel, and that portion of SGI, the auto fund, were sacred ground. We would not duck.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — In the resource sector, we believed

we needed a window in the industry and we should have a presence in oil, in the uranium, as well as potash, and we did. That was our strategy. And in many other areas where the private sector didn't want to get involved, but we felt that development should take place, we got involved with private sector and joint ventures or went directly with the co-op movement and set them up.

Our record on Crown corporations and development of this province is so clear as to be indisputable. We knew where we were going and we know where we're going.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And it worked very well. The unemployment was low, there was no debt, and we have services of all kinds that were nowhere else to be found in the world — they were here.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — But now we have this leaked document, this famous leaked document that has been slipped to the press. A brown package here or one over here. It didn't work. It didn't work.

Well then they said to themselves, it's not selling to the press. They're smarter than that, to . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Except for Jackson.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Except for Jackson, Paul Jackson, the former speech-writer for the Premier. He put something in the *Star-Phoenix*, and none of the other press still picked it up, and they kept giving out brown packages all over the place. And it still didn't sell.

So then they've decided, well we've got to run ads; we've got to run some ads. We've got to run some ads, and we'll take the taxpayers' money and we'll run ads about this leaked document. And we'll say that we won't call it government ads, we'll call them PC ads and we'll pay for them out of the party. But you know how that works with Dome Advertising, who has millions of dollars of contracts — millions of dollars of contracts — with this government.

Do you really believe that these ads are paid for by the PC Party? Tens of thousands of dollars? These ads are, I believe, paid for indirectly by the people of the province. Very much so.

So I say to you that this leaked document, this leaked document which is so exciting that you couldn't sell to the press in four years, you're now resorting to the taxpayers of the province to sell it for you.

And it's shameful because why are you doing it? Why are you running these ads? Did these ads have anything to do with privatization that is going on in this province? Does it have anything to do with the SaskPower that we're going to be privatizing here in this province in a few months? Does it have anything to do with privatizing the dental plan? Not a thing. Does it have anything to do with privatizing SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), which is the first step in getting rid of the auto fund? Not

anything at all, Mr. Speaker. This is an attempt to divert the people's attention away from 1989 back to the 1970s. Why would they do that? Why would this government that's full of new ideas and excited about the future want to talk about the 1970s? Why would they want to do that?

Mr. Speaker, why they would want to do that is because they're embarrassed about the fact that they started down a road that isn't working. They're like the young farmer who came back to take over his family's farm — all paid for — and got into trouble and started selling it off, running up debt.

(1230)

And in the end they said, what are we going to do to get off this image that we have that we can't do anything right? Well we're going to do some advertising and throw a big birthday party, and maybe people won't notice what we've done. Well I tell you, it is not working. It isn't working.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The people of this province know full well your record on privatization. They know that it isn't true. They know that you promised not to privatize SaskPower and you're now doing it. And the Minister of . . . the Deputy Premier knows full well — and I have quotes from him as well, when he said that he would not be privatizing SaskPower — in the House — after the Premier denied. Now one of two things went on there. Either the Premier misled the House and his friend and colleague and desk mate, or there's a misinterpretation of facts. Like, either it's for sale to the private sector or it isn't. Obviously, the truth is now known that they misled the House — very directly and deliberately misled the House.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order order. I'm sure the hon. member knows that that type of accusation is not acceptable, and I would ask him to rise and withdraw and apologize now.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a difficult time withdrawing the remarks, because I've quoted from *Hansard* where the minister has said that he would not privatize . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. Order, order. I don't intend to get into debate with the hon. member, but the rules of the House have been long-standing, and an accusation of any member deliberately misleading the House is not acceptable, and the hon. member knows that. And I would ask him to withdraw that remark.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well if I could, Mr. Speaker, I'd like you to listen to this quote and then think about reality and see whether or not the House was misled.

On November 14, the *Leader-Post* carries the story about SaskPower and the fact that the government is not going to privatize SaskPower.

**The Speaker:** — I'm afraid I'm going to once more have to ask the hon. member, and he knows, and I know he

knows, that the term “deliberately” — order, order, order, order, order, order — that the term “deliberately mislead” has not been allowed and traditionally not been allowed and is part of the rules of our Chamber, part of the rules of the Chamber. And therefore I will once more ask the hon. member to withdraw those remarks.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, I really can't understand what's objectionable about quoting from *Hansard* and making the interpretation, but I will withdraw the words of “deliberately attempted to mislead the House,” but I will have to insist that he attempted to mislead the House because I firmly believe that.

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

**The Speaker:** — I'm afraid that the hon. member has not really made a significant change in his wording. “He attempted to mislead” and “deliberately misled” is essentially the same, and therefore I once more ask the hon. member, with all due respect, to withdraw those words and continue with the debate.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I will of necessity withdraw the remark so that I can complete my comments because I think they're important to get on the record today because we're dealing with Bill 1, and I'm supposed to be speaking on Bill 1 on privatization. I would withdraw those remarks.

But I want to say that I really, really have a difficult time if I can't say that the minister attempted to mislead the House because I really believe that he did — I believe that he did.

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. I think that you have withdrawn your remarks as requested, and that's appreciated. And I don't think you should enter any more debate on that particular subject of . . . you can say attempt and this sort of thing. This is the rule; it's been satisfied now, and I just ask you to continue in debate.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I want to say to the members opposite that the quote that I'm going to read, and I've read before, obviously the minister and Premier were misleading the public. There's no doubt about it. There can be no doubt. How can you possibly say that you're not going to privatize SaskPower and the utilities and then set out to privatize the natural gas of the province and the distribution system? That is misleading the public.

And I want to say to you that it is very, very important that the public of the province know, and the press know, that this kind of misleading of the public goes on day after day after day on every issue that we can deal with. We can't get straight answers, and when we get answers, you can't believe them. You can't believe what they say.

They get up and say in their speeches, they're not going to privatize the natural gas in SaskPower and then a year later they privatize them. And this year they say they're not going to privatize the auto fund. Well who would believe that next year, if they're re-elected, they won't get around to privatizing the auto fund? Who would believe it, given their history? They promised not to privatize health care; they promised that. And they promised not to

privatize health care and then end up privatizing important sections of the health care system.

So I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that all is not bad about privatization, that there are some people who benefit. There are people who benefit. The member from Moose Jaw North will explain to you how Keith Parker, the member that he defeated, benefitted. He benefitted. He has a big job with the liquor commission, I understand. I might be wrong on that. Members may want to get up — the member for Regina South may want to get up and dispute that Keith Parker works for the Government of Saskatchewan in the Liquor Board commission.

Now how did he get the job? Did he compete like other graduates from university to get this high paid job? Obviously not. There's no work for people who go through the normal channels in this province any more. You've got to be a friend of the Tory party or a defeated candidate or a previous MLA.

Now there's been a big debate about who works for the government. The Tories would have you believe, when we ask questions about all these pop-em-up ministers who, you defeat them and then they get a job with the government — you knock them down again and then they get even a bigger job — that this is somehow indicative of what has gone on in the past. Well the difference is that when our members become members of the legislature, they move out of the ranks of government, working for the government, into these benches, not the reverse. That's quite a difference.

I want to say as well that philosophically we believe in a mixed economy. We believe that some people should work for the government. This is the difference. It would be normal . . .

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — It would be perfectly normal, it would be perfectly normal for New Democrats to work for the government, because they believe in a mixed economy. Let's say you have a third by co-ops, a third by private, a third by government. When we believe in that, a third of the NDP throughout the province somehow should be involved in the government.

What I find hypocritical is this. What I find hypocritical is this. We have these birds over there talking about how government is bad; how, given a chance, you should privatize and get the highway workers back working in the private sector and the dental technicians should work in the dental office. But what do they do when they get defeated? Do they go start up a small business entrepreneur and get out there and compete? What do they do?

What does Paul Schoenhals do? Does he go and set up a consulting firm and hire staff and go out and compete like ordinary people would? What does he do? He has no experience in potash, zero experience in potash. Where does he end up? Does he start out mining, competing for a job, and then work his way up the ladder? This defeated cabinet minister ends up at the top.

Now you can say that this is not hypocrisy, but many people in the province believe very much — and I'm sure the member from Regina South would agree — that when he's defeated that he will have the honour to go back to the private sector and not get a job with the government. He'll accept that.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — But I say to you, the list is very long, the list is long of defeated candidates and ministers and MLAs and MPs who have moved directly from defeat to the public trough, at big money.

The member from Wascana, who worked for a Crown corporation, should know better. The member from Regina Wascana would have you believe that only lazy people work for Crown corporations or governments. Well I say, where did you get your job? Where did you work? And I say that probably when you're defeated, probably . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — I worked as a free-lance commentator under contracts for 21 years.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The member for Regina Wascana says that he's a free-lance reporter. Well I'll tell you, he will be back to that in the very near future if we have an election.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I want to say a few words about advertising and the waste and mismanagement that is involved as well with privatization, because this is a key that many people are talking about. And we will be bringing this up over and over again, the tens of millions of dollars spent on advertising by this government, and it's directly linked to privatization.

Anyone who's been watching TV lately will have watched the glitzy ads that are produced by people who are involved with the Conservative Party and run their ad campaigns at election time, running these glitzy ads that gloss over what is really happening in the province.

I say again, Mr. Speaker, that this money is being wasted, being wasted when in fact it should be spent on education for young people so that the drop-out rate wouldn't be 50 per cent higher than it was when these people took over. It should be spent on such things as transportation subsidies for Northerners who interestingly enough, get their liquor subsidized by the government but not their milk and potatoes and fresh vegetables. That's an interesting proposition of privatization.

And I want to say to you that my final remarks will be once again about the heritage of this province. And in conclusion, I want to say this about Saskatchewan and where it has come from. I want to refer back to my family who are not political at all. My mother and father were not involved in any political party, and I don't think that my grandparents were either.

Now the member from Regina South can laugh about that from his desk, but I say to you this — that the people who came to this province tried the private operation. It was tried before the Depression in 1929. The people who came here believed that they needed to work together. The province was not easy to get along with; the climate was tough; there was wide distances between neighbours. They had to get together to build their houses and homes, schools and churches. That's what they did. And there was created in this province a co-operative system that is based in 50 or 60 or 70 or 80 years of heritage. It wasn't an idea that was brought here; it was created out of necessity.

Agrarian socialism was created here because it was necessary to get along in order to survive. I say to you that the hated railways at the time were a problem for the people. The grain exchange was a big problem for the farmers. They don't want to go back to the free grain exchange, as these people would have them. They got rid of that. They set up the wheat board and the wheat pools.

And when they needed power in rural Saskatchewan . . . and the member from Morse will have many of his supporters who will understand how SaskPower was created. The people in that area came to the government and asked them to set up a Crown corporation to deliver power. And they did. And the farmers and the farm families from the towns got together and actually helped the power company set the poles in the ground, and we built a power corporation that was second to none anywhere in the world.

And we set up a medicare system, not because the government went out and pushed medicare down people's throats. It was started in 1946 in the south-west corner of the province when region no. 1 was set up. Several R.M.s got together and hired a doctor. This was the beginning of medicare — people working for themselves together. And then medicare came because the government was pushed by the people to set up a medicare system.

Even a political party came out of that group of people who started this province. The Liberals and Conservatives weren't meeting the needs of the farmers and the working people, so they set up a progressive party that went on to be the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) and later the NDP.

(1245)

So at every turn we've created a province that's based on the mixed economy. It works. The simple fact is that in 1982 it was working. Housing was at great numbers. We were building 9 to 10,000 houses a year. People were building in the province. The province was growing. The population was going up.

Members shake their heads. They obviously can't read. The statistics are clear. The statistics are clear; you can't argue with them. House construction was around 10,000 units a year. The unemployment rate was about four and a half per cent. The debt was non-existent in the Consolidated Fund. In fact, your own report . . . and the

minister of Finance from Kindersley will recognize that because he signed the document that said there was \$139 million in the till the day he took over.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Now things weren't perfect, things weren't perfect. Obviously there was some unemployment and we would have wanted more wealth. But social programs were here second to none across Canada; this in a province that had few advantages over other provinces in Canada.

And where have we gone? Where have we gone? Where have we gone? We have now become so bankrupt of ideas that we say that people who owned the pulp mill, the people who owned the pulp mill shouldn't own it any more. We've got to get Americans in. And we brought in Americans to run our pulp mill and our forests in northern Saskatchewan. It was said, but we have a role to play for our people, and the minister referred to it yesterday — they're important enough to cut the ditches along the highway; that's their job.

And when we want to run the power company, the people aren't good enough to run it. They don't know how, even though they've been running in and built it, and it's been providing power for 50 years, that's not good enough. Get rid of it; get rid of SaskPower.

And the insurance company that was set up and operated by private insurance agents around the province and the people had control through their government, that's not good enough.

So the idea isn't that we should have everything in government hands, nor did we. Our record was clear. We had a flourishing private sector, flourishing Crown sector, and the co-operative movement was working. Interesting that we have for the first time, no minister of co-ops in this Assembly, but for the first time we have a minister of privatization — first time. That tells you something.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — That tells you we're putting our eggs all in one basket, not that that basket is bad because a private sector is important and we believed in that. But the simple fact is that it's a recipe for disaster in the economy of Saskatchewan, and the previous five years are proof of it.

We don't have to do any more to know that we've gone too far. That's our point. Our point is not that everything should be owned by the government or everything owned by the private sector, but a mixed economy working together to bring about an economic structure that will provide services for the people.

But the idea of hiding behind the skirts of Maggie Thatcher when you have no ideas of your own, when you have no ideas of your own, and implementing programs directly from Great Britain and England and expecting them to work here, is not an answer, nor is it a new idea. This idea is a century old — a century old. It was kicked out. It has been modified, and we've built a better system,



and you people who want to march back to the past are going to have to repeat all of those problems and all of those errors that had to be lived through by previous generations.

So I say to you in closing, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the Bill, and in fact, will be working hard to see its defeat.

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

**Mr. Kopelchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a proud day for the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan because this Act is one of the proudest pieces of legislation that has ever come before us.

I call it proud, Mr. Speaker, because it reflects and promotes so much of what this province is about, so much of our history, and so much of the essential meaning of our citizenship in a land which was born through the enterprise and will of its people.

Mr. Speaker, public participation is one great stage in the historic development of Saskatchewan. It is a natural progression of our economic and social development from the time we were a beginning province through to the 21st century. An understanding of this, Mr. Speaker, will help members opposite understand why the people of Saskatchewan are so supportive of the public participation policy of this government as embodied in this legislation.

I urge the members to reflect on our history — not with a jaundiced, partisan eye that they seem so possessed of, but with a non-partisan, interested examination. They will see that we have evolved from a purely aboriginal society to one engaged in moderate trade with the outside world. And in that first transition from isolation to a wider perspective, the very root of our economic history was born, and that strong route is trade.

The pioneers came to this territory and, without government, imposed structures. They worked hard, worked hard, and in co-operation with their neighbours, and they built themselves farms and towns and schools and growing communities with hope for the future.

Mr. Speaker, as those communities grew, so did the complexity of their relationships with the outside world. And in dealing with those complexities, and in order to have some security in their communities, they built institutions such as the credit unions and the co-operatives. And members opposite, Mr. Speaker, had better not be quite so hot-tongued on this subject as they (are) wont to be.

The fact is, I believe the first co-operative legislation in this province was passed in its first year as a province, 1905. At that time no one had even heard of the CCF, let alone the labour NDP. It was people like those who sit on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, who started co-ops and credit unions, and that should be reflected clearly and unequivocally on the record.

They built these institutions because they wanted growth. They wanted to maintain opportunities for their families.

They wanted to build their communities in the most effective ways possible, and the co-operative movement provided such tools.

Our history also reflects, Mr. Speaker, that it was not the NDP that first saw Crown corporations as a useful means to help our economy grow and provide opportunities for our families. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, that happened many decades before the NDP was even a twinkle in the eye of the Waffle movement, many decades before the CCF was imagined by the intellectuals.

The first Crown corporations were created, Mr. Speaker, by people who were members of my political party, the Progressive Conservative Party. And indeed the big start to government working in the economy in this country came with the country's first prime minister, a Conservative by the name of John A. Macdonald.

In building our country, our provinces, and our communities, it served us well to have government build a national railway, to have government fund canals in the Maritimes, and build the St. Lawrence Seaway, through which our prairie farm families could transport their grain to market.

And these were important and historic contributions of the Conservative Party, contributions through the use of government in the economy. And we have progressed ever more, Mr. Speaker, and the economy has continued to evolve. And this legislation is like those other major contributions; it represents a historic contribution to the development of our province. And I am pleased and proud, once again it is a Progressive Conservative government that is advancing the historic interests of this province and her people.

And in each case, Mr. Speaker, you look at what happened and you ask: why? And in each case the answer is a straightforward and easily understood one. In each case the mechanisms that were chosen were those that suited the economic circumstances of the day, the historic needs of the province. When the country was barren of development and the people were subject to the whims and dictates of a people far removed and beyond the reach of ready communication, the people turned to the co-operative movement as the mainstay of their communities.

And the co-operative movement and the credit union movement have tremendous importance to our people to this day for similar but slightly different reasons. And, Mr. Speaker, when massive amounts of capital were needed and there was no capital in the province to support the building of a railway or the construction of a seaway, it was capital beyond what we could even do with the co-operative structures, and in those economic circumstances the government was given the role to make the investment and take the province forward.

And today Crown investment still has a similar, if somewhat different, role and that is reflected in the construction of the NewGrade heavy oil upgrader as a partnership between the government and the Co-op. But the central point, Mr. Speaker, the central point is that today we have come to a new reality, a new economic

idea. And those new circumstances are best met with the participation of the people themselves, with their own stake in the future, and of the businesses they work for and obtain services from. The reason is there and it is clear.

It is not, Mr. Speaker, as members opposite would have you believe. It is not a matter of ideology or partisanship beliefs, it is a matter of joining with the people and continuing to build our province, our communities, and our families.

Mr. Speaker, I beseech the opposition to join with us, to join with the people and work with us in building this province. We are here approaching the year 2000, and it is time that all politicians came to the realization that the old dogma of the '60s and '70s will not work and has not worked.

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

**Mr. Kopelchuk:** — As I've pointed out earlier, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party is no stranger to Crown corporations; we invented them. But the former NDP government did not understand the purpose of Crown corporations, and instead we had a government run amok, government buying out farmers and businesses and buying and buying and buying and buying for the sake of buying, and it just simply did not work. Mr. Speaker, I say to the members opposite, it is time for the government to build, not buy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to show the members opposite that the vote on this Bill and the issues I have been addressing are not partisan, and I make a heartfelt effort to do so. I give them the advice of their own compatriots, New Democrats. I quote the NDP's own veteran strategist and former national party director, Gerald Kaplan, a fellow we see regularly representing the NDP on CTV's *Canada A.M.*, and I quote Mr. Kaplan:

The field of public ownership and nationalization is outdated. In places where it's been tried, it hasn't worked with the success we thought it would. The market seems to be the best way of producing wealth, yet there's no doubt that New Democrats are suspicious, even hostile to business.

Gerry is telling his own party it is time to recognize the historical evolution of modern economies; that if this province is to diversify, to create jobs, to pay for health care and special programs if we are to accomplish the prosperity and security for our people, then we must go forward to the policies of public participation and not hang on to the outdated ideas of government ownership and control. This is not the time, Mr. Speaker. It is Gerald Kaplan of the New Democratic Party providing this informed advice to his compatriots.

Another New Democrat also wishes his party to join with us in public participation and, by extension, in supporting this legislation. This is a man who understands the history of the NDP because he is an NDP historian, and members opposite will recognize his eminent name — Prof. Desmond Morton. Prof. Morton says, the NDP — and I quote:

We must abandon the policy of mass public ownership in favour of alternative forms of worker involvement such as profit sharing and employee stock options.

Profit sharing and employee stock, Mr. Speaker, are a big part

of what this legislation is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I have a lot more to say, but noting the time, I would adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Resignation of Deputy Chairman of Committees

**The Speaker:** — Prior to adjournment of the House, which I assume will be very, very shortly, I wish to inform the House that I have received a communication from the member for Rosthern which reads as follows:

Dear Mr. Speaker: I respectfully ask the Legislative Assembly to allow me to resign from the post of deputy chairman of committees, a post which I have felt greatly honoured to have occupied. Yours truly, the member from Rosthern.

## MOTIONS

### Appointment of Deputy Chairman of Committees

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, in light of your recent announcement, I would like to move, seconded by the Deputy Premier, and with leave of the Assembly:

That Donald James Toth, Esq., member for the constituency of Moosomin be deputy chairman of committees of this Assembly.

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that this House do now adjourn. Prior to that, I would like to, on behalf of this side of the House, wish the members of the opposition and the public of Saskatchewan a very happy and safe Easter weekend. And I now move to adjourn the House.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Melfort, the Minister of Highways, has moved that this House do now adjourn. Before reporting the question, I would also like to join with him and wish all members of the Assembly a very, very pleasant Easter weekend.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I would just like to join with Mr. Speaker and the member opposite to wish the staff and employees in the building, as well as the members of the government, and my colleagues as well, a happy Easter, and look forward to being back Tuesday.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:02 p.m.