

EVENING SITTING

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
(BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Lane that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I finish my introductory remarks and get into the main text of the things I want to say, I would just like to recap briefly some of the items that we discussed prior to the supper break.

We discussed the question of taxation, how the government has broken promise after promise after promise on taxation; how they have, instead of refining or reforming the taxation system so that it's fair to all involved, they have in fact developed a system in this province that is unfair to working and poor people of this province — so unfair, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to remind you that in 1986, in this province of Saskatchewan, there were over 200 people who earned more than \$100,000 and who paid not a cent in income tax.

Mr. Speaker, that doesn't seem fair to me, and it doesn't seem fair to the people of this province, to have to endure a tax regime and a tax system where more than 200 Saskatchewan taxpayers earning more than \$100,000 don't pay a cent in income tax — not a dime, not a nickel. But that's the kind of taxation regime and that's the kind of economic system that the government and the members opposite support, a system which is unfair because it taxes the poor, it taxes the working people of the province — not for the benefit of the working people, not for the benefit of the poor, but for the benefit of the rich, the benefit of the powerful, the benefit of their own corporate elite and business friends.

And, Mr. Speaker, it replicates, it mirrors a situation which has developed in this country because of governments of Progressive Conservative and Liberal stripe which have developed an economic system and a taxation system which leaves most of the country, most of the wealth of the country, in the hands of a small elite.

And I want to refer you, Mr. Speaker, and it's something I would refer all members of the Assembly to, is to a new publication called *Social Inequality in Canada: Patterns, Problems and Policies*. It was produced this year and is based on the latest research from Statistics Canada, and it deals with things like questions of occupational mobility, of getting around, jobs in the labour market, the pros and cons of income redistribution, and the nature of poverty in Canada, as well as the whole question of the distribution of wealth and riches. And on page 94 of this publication, Mr. Speaker, we have a table based on the estimated wealth per Canadian adult. And again I remind you that these statistics come not from our party, but from Statistics Canada, and the Royal Bank of Canada and the

Bank of Canada itself.

I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, in referring to this particular table, that what you hear here applies, and applies even more so in Saskatchewan when it comes to distribution of wealth and riches in this society. According to this book and according to this table, Mr. Speaker, the top 1 per cent of Canadians, that's 165,000 Canadians, had total net worth — that is the net worth, that is assets over liabilities — of \$146.361 billion. That's 165,000 people have \$146.361 billion of wealth, or as a share of the national wealth of this country, the top 1 per cent of Canadians control 18.8 per cent of the total wealth, for an average of \$887,040 per individual. The top 1 per cent controls almost 19 per cent of the wealth of this country.

The next 4 per cent, Mr. Speaker, 661,000 individuals, have a total net worth of \$187.623 billion, or 24.1 per cent of the share of the wealth of this country. The next 5 per cent, that is 826,000 individuals, have a net worth of 110.549 billion or 14.2 per cent of the wealth of this country. And when you add those numbers together — that's the top 10 per cent of the individuals in Canada ranked according to wealth — you have 1.653 million individuals controlling \$444.534 billion or 57.1 per cent of the total wealth of this province. That is, the top 10 per cent of Canadians control over 50 per cent of the wealth. The top 10 per cent of Canadians control 57.1 per cent of the wealth.

The next top 10 per cent, to bring you to a total of 3.306 million Canadians, control \$570.654 billion worth of assets. That's their net worth. Mr. Speaker, that's their net worth. The top 20 per cent of Canadians controlled 73.3 per cent of the wealth. That's called social inequality, Mr. Speaker. That's called a distribution of wealth in a system which is totally topsy-turvy, where you have the top 10 per cent of Canadians controlling over 50 per cent of the wealth; the top 20 per cent controlling almost 75 or three-quarters. Three-quarters of all wealth in Canada are controlled by the top 20 per cent.

And when you look at the bottom of the pile, the reverse is true. The reverse is true, Mr. Speaker. The bottom 40 per cent of Canadians, the bottom 40 per cent of Canadians, do they control 40 per cent of the wealth? No. Do they control 20 per cent of the wealth? No, they don't. Would they control 10 per cent of the wealth? No, again. The bottom 40 per cent of Canadians control 0.8, 0.8 per cent of the wealth. The bottom 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker, control 0.8 per cent of the wealth, whereas the top . . . The average wealth controlled by the top 10 per cent of Canadians averages out to \$268,925 per adult. The bottom 40 per cent — and I'm sure that that's where the majority, the great majority of the members opposite, the members on this side of the House fit in, to the bottom 40 per cent — control \$30,377. Pardon me, \$1,002. One thousand and two dollars, which is the assets, the real assets, because that's what we are talking about in wealth, assets clear of all debt. So we have the top 10 per cent, the top 10 per cent controlling \$268,000 each, clear of all debt; the bottom 40 per cent having \$1,002.

People wonder why there's poverty in this country.

People wonder why that we have poor people in this country. People wonder why, what is it and why do we have the kind of situation that we find in Saskatchewan where we have food banks. We're here in the bread-basket of Canada. We have the second highest rate of poverty. The answer, very simple, is because the top 10 per cent of the population controls over 50 per cent of the wealth; the top 20 per cent controls over 70 per cent of the wealth. Very simple. Not too hard to understand, Mr. Speaker.

Because the bottom 40 per cent of the population, I would submit to you, are not lazy. The bottom 40 per cent of the population work. The bottom 40 per cent of the population represent the heart and soul of this country that creates real wealth in this country, because those are the people who do the work. Those are the people who turn the wheels of industry. Those are the people who make the tractors that the farmers in Saskatchewan drag across the land to produce crops. It's those people, that 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker, who, I submit to you, aren't lazy, don't fit into the kind of categories that the member from Melville would like to put poor people into.

And I ask you, Mr. Speaker, in terms of this budget, and the acid test of this budget is: does the taxation regime put into place by this budget go to decrease that social inequality that we find in this country and in this province, or does it go to increase the social inequality?

And I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that based on the types of taxes that were introduced in this budget, that it goes to further erode the real wealth enjoyed by the great majority of people in Saskatchewan and goes to enhance the wealth owned by that top 10 per cent which controls over 50 per cent of the wealth.

Because if you look, Mr. Speaker, at who that top 10 per cent are, you will see names like Thomson. Now Mr. Thomson, and I've ... Mr. Thomson, for example, Mr. Thomson owns Thomson newspapers. And Mr. Thomson represents that ... finds himself in that top 10 per cent of all Canadians who control 57 per cent of the wealth. That same Mr. Thomson, Mr. Speaker, also owns the Hudson's Bay Company, and he also owns Simpsons, and he also owns Zellers, and he also owns Scottish & York insurance, McCallum Transport, Fields Store, International Thomson, Woodbridge, and 119 other businesses in this country — and 119 other businesses in this country, right?

Do you think Mr. Thomson and his businesses were affected by the tax regime introduced by this budget? Do you think Mr. Thomson's businesses were affected? Not a chance, Mr. Speaker, not a chance. Not a chance.

Or how about the Weston family, who find themselves, I believe it's the third richest, the third richest family in Britain? I noticed in today's newspaper that after the Queen and after the Duke of Westminster, we find Mr. Weston and his family the third richest family in Britain. They also happen to be Canadians. They own B.C. Packers, and Loblaws, Weston Bakeries, Bowes, Nielsen, Supervalu, Superstore, OK Economy, Nabob, Eddy Paper, Donlands Dairy, and 166 ... hundred other firms.

Now, Mr. Speaker, was Mr. Weston's family, was it affected by the taxes introduced in this budget? Was it? Not a bit, Mr. Speaker, not one bit, not one bit. Your family and my family and the families of the people in the constituency I represent, Mr. Speaker, they were affected and they were affected adversely. And it didn't matter whether they were white-collar workers or blue-collar workers or small-business people, they all got dinged by this budget. But did the Ken Thomsons, did the Conrad Blacks, did the Paul Desmarais, did those people who own the businesses, the big businesses that operate in this province — did they get dinged? Fat chance! Not on your life they didn't get dinged.

And, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina South can laugh all he wants. Right? He thinks it's very funny that ordinary people in this province — working people, white collar people, blue collar people and small business get ... pay through the nose in his tax regime where his big-business buddy gets off. Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Regina and the people of this province will speak as to the performance of this government and what this budget does. And, Mr. Speaker, it is clear, it is clear that when you have a system of taxation in Saskatchewan that lets more than 200 people earn more than \$100,000 a year get off scot-free without paying one cent in income tax, you know that the people of this province won't stand for that and that they will take the kind of retribution that is coming to this government, Mr. Speaker.

We said it's a cruel budget. It's cruel when it comes to taxation because it doesn't deal with social inequality in this province in any way.

(1915)

Mr. Speaker, we also talked about cheap land. We also talked about the cheap land policy, the cheap land policy of this government, and how because year after year after year we have seen 1,000 farm families a year, three farm families a day, get driven off the land. The Premier finally came clean in Moose Jaw the other week and said it's part of his economic strategy of cheap land and cheap labour. And we made it clear, Mr. Speaker, that those of us on this side of the House say to the Premier and say to the Progressive Conservative Party, we will not stand by and allow Saskatchewan farm land to go and be sold and put into bondage at the hands of foreign investors.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — We have said no, Mr. Speaker, we have said no to cheap land, to that policy of cheap land. We say no to that policy. We say yes to Saskatchewan farm families; we say yes to Saskatchewan farm land held by Saskatchewan farm families. And, Mr. Speaker, if I may, to those farmers who are facing foreclosure at the hands of the Minister of Agriculture, the Premier of the province, I want to say to them tonight: hold on, hold on and keep the faith, and keep the faith with Saskatchewan. Because, Mr. Speaker, for those farm families, as there is for the rest of Saskatchewan, there is a new day coming.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — There is a new horizon, Mr. Speaker, there

is a new sun coming over that horizon, and that new day will allow those farm families who want to farm in Saskatchewan to have their farm land and to be able to work with others in their communities to rebuild along with our new-day government, to work together, to bring forth a rebuilt rural Saskatchewan. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, we're opposed to the cheap land policy that's supported by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, along the other side of the equation of cheap land, the Premier has as his economic strategy cheap labour. Now cheap labour, Mr. Speaker, says to the working people of this province, we want you to work for less wages. We want you to work for less than you're making now in both real terms and in absolute terms. We are going to institute an economic policy — this according to the Premier of the province — that will drive down your living standards.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the working people of Saskatchewan believe that the Premier is on that track. They have suffered for eight long years, for eight long years under that kind of economic policy. They have seen the changes to The Trade Union Act, they have seen the changes proposed under the employee benefits Act and changes to The Labour Standards Act. They have seen employers take the government-imposed wage and price guide-lines . . . I shouldn't say wage and price guide-lines because that's incorrect. They have seen the wage guide-lines imposed by this government directly and indirectly on the public service and on the private sector. They have seen and felt and known the kind of cruelty that is contained in that kind of economic policy.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, they're saying, we don't agree with a policy of cheap labour because we, the working people of this province, will not be made slaves for a PC government. We will not be exploited by the employers who have bought and paid for each and every member of the PC Party sitting in this legislature opposite. They are saying, Mr. Speaker, they are saying that we're not going to put up with it. And, Mr. Speaker, they're not only saying it, they're taking action against it, Mr. Speaker. I want to read to you, Mr. Speaker, if I may, the headline in today's *Leader-Post*. It says, "Economic exiles fleeing province."

Fleeing, Mr. Speaker, "Economic exiles fleeing province." I'll just read this for a minute. Date-line, Saskatoon:

When salesman Jim Walden received an offer to transfer to Calgary from Saskatoon late last year, he and his wife Valerie jumped at the chance.

There just weren't the opportunities any more for a senior salesman like myself in Saskatoon, said Walden, who works for an electrical manufacturing firm.

And it keeps going on.

If the farmer is not making a buck, he's not going to invest. Then I can't sell electrical products to an engineering firm or contractor because they haven't got any work. And if the potash industry

can't sell fertilizer, then I can't sell products to the potash mines. I couldn't see any change in the next year or year and a half.

Then, Mr. Speaker, it goes on.

The Waldens are not alone — almost 33,000 Saskatchewan residents opted to leave last year in pursuit of better job, schooling and retirement opportunities in other provinces, according to preliminary figures compiled by the statistics bureau in . . .

Saskatchewan? No, not Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, compiled by ". . . British Columbia."

The British Columbia Bureau of Statistics notes, and notes with some interest the number of economic exiles fleeing from this province.

You see, Mr. Speaker, it's very plain, whether it's the construction worker going to Ontario to look for a construction job or whether it's the young person going to look . . . going to British Columbia where they know there's going to be a NDP government very soon . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — . . . to take advantage of the natural resources and the natural competitive position of British Columbia. Those young people are going there by the droves, because they figure they can get a better deal in British Columbia than they can with their own government right here in Saskatchewan.

Whether it is a single person, Mr. Speaker, who is out . . . the single family head that can't take any more of the kind of economic injustice imposed on him by this government, or whether it is the salesman, the senior salesman or the small-business person, like the small-business person who runs the trucking company, who lives in the constituency of Regina Rosemont, and who told me on Saturday night that he's going to put his trucking company up to sale because the gas tax makes it impossible to operate competitively in this province; that he's going to leave this province. This, Mr. Speaker, from somebody who in 1982 — 1982 — voted for the Conservative government; in 1986 voted for the Conservative government; and in 1989 is leaving the province because of the Conservative government.

And the member from Regina South laughs. Driving small-business people from this province is a joke for that member, Mr. Speaker. Driving 33,000 people from the province last year is a joke from that person. No wonder he couldn't even get, Mr. Speaker, no wonder he couldn't even get good Gordon Dirks, his front boy, elected as mayor of Regina.

Because, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province know. The working people of this province know what the record, the real record of that government is. And they're voting already, Mr. Speaker, and they're voting with their feet. I want to say to those working people, Mr. Speaker, hold on; just hold on and keep the faith because there's a new day coming for working people in this province.

Because . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, when the New Democratic Party forms the next government in this province under the direction of the member from Riversdale, the leader of our party, the person who will put Saskatchewan workers back to work at decent jobs, at decent salary levels, and in a decent working situation; when that new day arises, Mr. Speaker, we're going to need people to rebuild urban Saskatchewan the same way that the farm families will come back to our province to help our government rebuild rural Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — So I say to those people, Mr. Speaker, keep the faith. Hold on; keep the faith; because there's a new day coming, and there's a new day coming, and it's going to be a lot quicker than most people imagine, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the budget address presented by the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, the Minister of Finance, was astounding. It was astounding in its omission of jobs. We have a situation in the province, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, where we have 43,000 people unemployed; where we have an unemployment rate of 17 per cent among young people; where for the first time since statistics were kept in this country, Saskatchewan is above average, above the national average, for unemployment.

It is absolutely mind-boggling, to say the least, to see the Minister of Finance introduce no new job creation programs, to introduce no long-term job development strategies, to introduce nothing in that budget which will provide a future for the young people of this province, Mr. Speaker. It's absolutely astounding, it's absolutely astounding.

But today, Mr. Speaker, today we found out why. The member from Melville, the minister of unemployment, of human exploitation . . .

An Hon. Member: — The Home Hardware salesman.

Mr. Lyons: — My friend, the member from Regina Victoria, refers to him as the Home Hardware salesman. Well it's hard living in a home where he has control over so much of our province's natural resources, Mr. Speaker.

That member from Melville outlined the government's economic strategy for job creation, Mr. Speaker, and it's one that I am sure Noah, when Noah built the ark, would understand. Maybe that's the only job it would create. Maybe that's what that member is saying. He's saying, Mr. Speaker, you got to pray for rain if you want jobs. That's it, Mr. Speaker. That's what the member from Melville said is the government's economic strategy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think anybody in the province believes that a minister of the Crown could actually really believe that. But when he was questioned again, he repeated it again. How are we going to create jobs in this

province? That was the question that the member from Moose Jaw North asked. What was the response from the member from Melville? Hope it rains. Hope it rains. We'll have jobs when it rains.

Well, the problem is, Mr. Speaker, the big drip strategy from the big dripper — if I may refer to the member in such a way — won't work. Everybody in this province knows that it won't work. It may create arks.

The problem is for most working people, however, Mr. Speaker, all punning aside, is that it has been raining on the people of this province long enough. It has been raining the kind of economic cruelty that we have seen in this budget, has been inundating the people of Saskatchewan for long enough. They want to pull up the umbrellas, and they're going to, Mr. Speaker. They're going to put up the umbrellas, and they'll be sending the member from Melville and all those other members away on their own little political ark, leaving them high and dry on a Mount Ararat somewhere far away. Because, Mr. Speaker, we know, as do the people of Saskatchewan, as does everybody that watches the proceedings of this Assembly, that that is a dead government over on the other side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there was an aspect of the budget outlined by my friend and colleague, the member from Regina Centre, and he referred to the budget as a government of corruption, as a budget of corruption. Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to go into the point-by-point way in which the Minister of Finance has once again cooked the books, once again gotten into a political operation so as to make things appear as they are not and make things appear not as they are — in other words to engage in a kind of political flimflammy with the books of the province of Saskatchewan.

The Crown Corporations Committee, not two weeks ago, outlined by the deputy minister of Finance that the government knows from a day-to-day basis, on a month-to-month basis, what the actual situation of the finances of the provinces are, and was able to, through his testimony, tell the people of the province that what we on this side of the House have been saying was true all along; that the government plays with the books of the province for its own political purposes. And such is the case with this budget. It is a political document; it is a corrupt document because it's a not true document. It has nothing to do with reality — the reality of the finances of the province, or the reality of where we stand as a government, or where you stand as your government.

(1930)

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about another kind of corruption. I want to talk about the kind of corruption that, in the minds of most people of this province, leaves them with the impression that this is probably the most corrupt government in the history of this province. And I say corrupt, Mr. Speaker, in the sense as it's outlined in the dictionary: able to take bribes, able to be bought and sold, that kind of corruption. And the other side of that kind of corruption, Mr. Speaker, is venality, that is, the ability to be obtained for money, and be prepared to take bribes.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not talking here strictly of patronage. All governments, Mr. Speaker, engage in patronage. I don't think anybody would argue that. And sometimes, Mr. Speaker, that patronage is for very good reasons. On the one hand you reward loyal workers — workers who have been loyal to the cause — and it's a method of rewarding people. The other one is that people are put into sensitive political position in order to give a certain political direction to the civil service, or to those who are engaged in the Crown corporations.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think that this government . . . And I think the people of this province think that this government has exceeded any in the history of this province, or any in the history of this country, when it comes to the kind of patronage that has been practised.

We're not just talking about people like George Hill, former president of the PC Party; or Dave Tkachuk, who seems to move in and out of government like a car moves in and out of a garage; or people like Paul Schoenhals, or Myles Morin, or the dozens of others, you know, who have been placed in politically sensitive positions.

It's been common practice, Mr. Speaker, in this province, that when those who are appointed politically are, if you'll pardon the pun, disappointed politically . . . Those who live by the sword die by the sword. And there's always been a place in the history and tradition of politics in this province where you appoint some people to politically sensitive places, and when and if, or if and when, as is always is the case, the tide goes out for that political party, the debris goes out along with it.

And that's what's going to happen, Mr. Speaker, after the next election. The debris will be gone. There will be no George Hill as president of the power corporation. That's one thing that's for certain — right? Yes, that's what my friends, my colleague, the member from Prince Albert calls it: two-bill Hill. And there won't be room for two-bill Hill in a New Democratic Party government. Mr. Hill knows that. We know that. And there's no use trying to hide and say that anything different would happen.

The same thing can be said of people like Mr. Morin or Mr. Schoenhals or Mr. Dirks or Mr. Gerrard, or any of the other of those who have been appointed into politically sensitive positions. Mr. Schoenhals will no longer be head of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And those people will lose their jobs. And that's the way it goes, and that's the way it's always gone.

But there's been a new aspect added to political patronage in this province, Mr. Speaker, and that's been the politicization of the civil service, and that's been the politicization of the Crown corporations. You know, Mr. Speaker, this government has injected politicization into the civil service and into the Crown corporations the same way that the Mazda Optimist Track Club injected steroids into sports in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and the same remedy will need to be applied. There will need to be a judicial review or a review of some type into the politicization of the civil service, into the politicization of the Crown corporations. And, Mr. Speaker, I refer here specifically to the activities of those who — prior to the

coming to power of the Progressive Conservative government — those who occupy positions which were seen as politically neutral but administratively sensitive.

And I look now, Mr. Speaker, and I see the activities of certain people in the administration — in the Crown corporations or in the civil service — people like George Hood, General Manager of the Souris Basin Development Authority, who has taken it upon himself to be a political champion of this government.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the George Hood's of the world will, along with their bosses, George Hill, be gone after the next election. And there will be no tears shed by those of us on this side of the House. Those who want to engage in political activities in a partisan political nature, directly and openly while on the job, while doing their jobs supposedly as neutral civil servants, will be treated accordingly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that's one kind of political corruption that we've seen with this government.

There's another kind of moral political corruption well known by people like the member from Wascana who takes part in it in an indirect way. It's a kind of political and individual moral corruption practised . . . It seems to be a trade mark of the Progressive Conservative Party . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm quite sure the member from Wascana wants to get engaged in the debate. I seem to have touched a nerve with that particular member when it comes to talking about individual moral corruption. And all I say to that member, Mr. Speaker, if he's guilty of individual moral corruption, if the shoe fits . . . Perhaps it's pinching a little bit. Because it's that kind of individual moral corruption, Mr. Speaker, which becomes the trade mark of the Progressive Conservative Party, provincially and federally.

Let's take a look at the Colin Thatchers, Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the Colin Thatchers, the activities of the PC member, the former PC member from Thunder Creek. Let's take a look at the activities of Geoff Wilson, Mr. Speaker, member of parliament for the west part of the province. Let's take a look at that kind of moral corruption. Right? Mr. Wilson was involved in offering bribes, offering bribes to someone who went to jail for taking the same bribe.

Or how about Jim Garner, Mr. Speaker? How about Jim Garner, the former minister of Highways in this particular government? Right? Now Mr. Garner, he had . . . At least, Mr. Speaker, he had the decency to resign; he had the courtesy and the decency to resign when he was found out to be not telling the truth in this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, we could talk about the moral corruption of a Sinclair Stevens, or a Michel Gravel, or an Edouard Desrosiers, or a Roch Lasalle, or the list that goes on and on and on and on. As my colleague from Regina Victoria has pointed out, we could even talk about the kind of moral corruption of the former PC MLA from Manitoba . . . who was convicted of selling illegal drugs to children. And all these righteous folks on the other side like to talk

about the PCs and how they're committed to the family. Well we know that particular PC was committed to that family.

Mr. Speaker, that kind of moral corruption pales, it pales when we see the kind of corrupt use of government for political and personal ends exhibited by present members who sit and occupy the benches opposite. I'm talking about the kind of moral corruption, Mr. Speaker, which would lead the Minister of the Environment, the Deputy Premier, and the Premier of this province to engage in an activity which many legal people in this province now think is illegal — now think is illegal. That is, Mr. Speaker, they've engaged in a conspiracy to suppress, they've engaged in a conspiracy to cover up, and they've engaged in a conspiracy to hide certain information which by law must have been made public. And I'm referring to the Rafferty-Alameda environmental impact statement, Mr. Speaker, when I refer to this.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment, the Deputy Premier, and the Premier knew of features of this project prior to the development of the environmental impact statement. They knew of those features, for example, the pumping of ground water out of the aquifers in the area into various water retention systems, into various dams.

Mr. Speaker, we have introduced documentary evidence into the legislature to produce . . . to show this to be the case. And that Minister of the Environment, Mr. Speaker, knew about this, suppressed it, covered it up on orders from the Premier and the Deputy Premier.

You know, Mr. Speaker, section 111 of the Criminal Code of Canada, under which that minister is presently being investigated, is presently being investigated, talks about public trust and the need for elected officials to carry out their responsibility as laid out in law. It was the responsibility of that Minister of the Environment to make public all information pertaining to the Rafferty-Alameda environmental board of inquiry. That minister suppressed the information, Mr. Speaker. That minister broke the law, Mr. Speaker. That minister, Mr. Speaker, with the knowledge, and I would suspect with the complicity and encouragement of the Premier of the province, entered into that conspiracy to circumvent those things which he is legally and legislatively responsible.

That minister, Mr. Speaker, has used his office when it came to looking after the environmental interests of the people of this province, used his office, not to protect the interests of the people, but used his office to protect the narrow partisan interests of the government. And he did so, Mr. Speaker, in a manner which broke, I would submit, and other lawyers in this province submit, broke section 111 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

And, Mr. Speaker, I predict that within eight months or six months that minister won't be sitting there as the Minister of the Environment, and part of the reason he won't be sitting there as the Minister of the Environment is because the government darn well knows that they are part of a conspiracy to deny the people of this province their right as enacted in legislation.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is the most deadly form of moral

corruption. That, Mr. Speaker, is a dereliction of duty. That, Mr. Speaker, is the kind of abuse of power that reflects poorly on each and every member of the legislature whether on that side of the House and this side of the House. Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of moral corruption which put all politicians, including yourself, into disrepute. And that's the kind of . . .

The Speaker: — I would appreciate if the hon. member in his remarks would not involve the Chair.

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, I certainly didn't intend any negative reflection on the character of the person occupying the Chair in any way whatsoever. I do however, Mr. Speaker, in the line of the remarks that I was previously making, say to you, and say to all members of the House, you're going to pay for it. You on the other side are going to pay for it.

The problem is, is we all pay for it in the end because when you subvert a process which is legislated, when you subvert a process which was democratically introduced and which was democratically decided upon, you're subverting the very institutions, and you are guilty of the kind of moral corruption and complicity that leads to your own demise.

That, Mr. Speaker . . . Now some people may say that's just an isolated incident. We know that the Rafferty-Alameda project is about buying votes in Estevan, and we know it's about buying votes in Souris-Cannington, the constituencies occupied by the Premier and the Deputy Premier, respectively.

(1945)

And we know it's about building up a political project down in that part of the country. Everybody in Saskatchewan knows that fact to be true, Mr. Speaker. And we also know that it's going to cost each and every person — man, woman, and child — in this province, \$1,400 by the time this thing is completed. And we also know, Mr. Speaker, that the economics of it are such that the friends and the big-business friends of the PC government opposite are the ones who are going to . . . They're the ones who are going to benefit at it, not the rest of us.

I noticed, Mr. Speaker, in the paper, Mr. Oscar Hanson and Mr. Bob Rempel, both from SaskPower, predicted that we would have a need in the next 10 years of only a 3 per cent growth in electrical and power consumption. Mr. Speaker, we don't need a power plant at Shand, we don't need a nuclear power plant to provide that kind of thing. I look here, Mr. Speaker, and I see that there are things like energy-efficient light bulbs, produced by people like Philips, well-known and respected people in the . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Is that an exhibit? What does the member have there? Does he have an exhibit of some sort? Is that a light bulb that he is holding? What does he have there? What does he have? I'm just asking the question.

An Hon. Member: — I'm reading from a box, Mr.

Speaker.

The Speaker: — Okay. Order, order. All members know, and I know that you know, there's ways of trying to evade rules sometimes. I'm not suggesting that at all. I'm just bringing to his attention that exhibits should not be permitted and I hope he treats it as such, whatever he has.

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, I'll take out the exhibit, which is this light bulb — it's the energy-efficient light bulb — and if it's okay, I will read the box. Okay.

And, Mr. Speaker, this light bulb produced by Philips, a renowned electrical engineering firm, known throughout the world, a good company, produces good products, has now produced and has been producing for the last 10 years, energy-efficient light bulbs. And according to the information I have, and on their box in which the light bulb comes, Mr. Speaker, one of these light bulbs lasts 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs, energy savings of between 70 and 80 per cent, fits existing ordinary light bulb sockets, produces a warm pleasant light similar to the standard light bulb. And, Mr. Speaker, I consulted with some electrical engineers, one of whom is employed by SaskPower, and the use of those kind of energy efficient light bulbs in this province, Mr. Speaker, and it depends on the number that were introduced, would produce between 150 and 300 megawatts — 150 and 300 megawatts of savings in energy, Mr. Speaker.

Now every new megawatt . . . every new watt, excuse me, Mr. Speaker, of energy in this province costs \$3 to produce. We can save between 150 and 300 megawatts — that is 150 to 300,000 watts of power . . . pardon me, million watts of power, Mr. Speaker. That is, those energy efficient light bulbs can save Saskatchewan Power Corporation close to \$900 million directed towards new capacity.

One little innovation like the introduction of energy efficient light bulbs. They start thinking, Mr. Speaker. You put them into the legislature; then you put them into the SaskTel building; then you put them into the SaskPower building; then you put them into the SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) building; you put them in the STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) building. And you start introducing them around the province, Mr. Speaker. You know all of a sudden that 3 per cent demand in electrical increase doesn't appear. In fact, what we get is a decrease in electrical demand which makes Shand redundant — which makes the Shand power plant redundant.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, those who are proponents of the Shand power plant and the Rafferty-Alameda dam — people like Jack Muirhead and all those people down in that part of the country who think this is such a great project — I'm proposing, Mr. Speaker, for them, that we will entertain one privatization of SaskPower, and that that one privatization of SaskPower be the Shand power plant; and that Mr. Muirhead and all those people from the Souris Basin, good water boys, they put their money where their mouth is and they buy that power plant.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, people like Mr. Muirhead and some of these other people who think that only they

have the right to speak about the Rafferty-Alameda project and the Shand project, because that's in their part of the country, what I want to say to them, Mr. Speaker, is this: all the taxpayers of Saskatchewan are going to pay \$1,400 for every man, woman, and child to build these projects. And if they don't want us and the rest of Saskatchewan speaking about that project, perhaps they should put their money up. And perhaps the good folks of Estevan who are members of the Souris Basin Good Water Association, maybe those are the ones who should be putting up the money. And maybe, Mr. Speaker, that's what will happen, is that we will shift the cost of this project on to those members down there so that they can pay through it through their own taxes, and those of us in the rest of the province who know what kind of political boondoggle this is won't be burdened with this extra \$1,400 each.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — You know, that may be the answer, Mr. Speaker. Let those that want it pay for it.

Now I'm not a great proponent of user-pay, but I'm not . . . I can tell you this: I'm certainly not a proponent when only those who are going to benefit make the rest of us pay. And so perhaps, Mr. Speaker, that's one way we can find ourselves out of this dilemma.

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude . . . Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I want to return back to the Rafferty-Alameda project — not the project itself, but the manner in which the environmental impact statement was conducted, Mr. Speaker.

The people of Canada, because now it's received media attention in the *Globe and Mail* day after day, and the *Winnipeg Free Press* day after day, on the Canadian Press wire services all throughout Canada, know that the Rafferty-Alameda environmental impact statement was a cooked statement and it was cooked with the connivance of the Deputy Premier and the Premier and the Minister of the Environment.

But what I say, Mr. Speaker, is that if they go to those lengths to cook something like the Rafferty-Alameda, two little dams in south-eastern Saskatchewan, what lengths will they go to to cook the environmental impact statement of the nuclear power plant that they're pushing around this province — the nuclear power plant supported by the Premier of this province, who is going around this province trying to act as a proponent for that particular project. We've seen what they've done with Rafferty-Alameda, Mr. Speaker. What are they going to do with a nuclear power plant? What kind of cooking of the books are they going to do to try to make the nuclear power plant saleable to the people of this province? I don't think they can, Mr. Speaker.

Quite frankly, I don't think there's anything they can say about that nuclear power plant that will make it palatable to the people of the province. But I know after seeing what they did with Rafferty-Alameda, and the people of Saskatchewan know after seeing what they've done with Rafferty-Alameda, that they will go to any lengths at all to put forward this politically motivated project, to bail out

their friends at Atomic Energy of Canada Limited.

And I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that when the books of the province are revealed, what we'll find is that the deal which sold SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation), the uranium mines and the gold mines, and merged it with Cameco (Canadian Mining Energy Corporation), that what you will see that was part of that deal as a codicil is the agreement by the province of Saskatchewan to at least attempt to buy a Candu 3 nuclear reactor. So I think that's part of the deal, Mr. Speaker, judging from the way that the people who operate on that side of the House operate.

Mr. Speaker, our opposition and the opposition of the leader of our party to this particular nuclear power plant is well known. We, in this side of the House, on this side of the House, say clearly and unequivocally we don't need that nuclear power plant. And that, Mr. Speaker, is not just the opinion of our caucus here in Saskatchewan. The Minister of the Environment, the Tory Minister of the Environment in Alberta says there is no need anywhere in western Canada for a nuclear power plant. That's the Tory Minister of the Environment in Alberta said that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, an all party committee of the House of Commons reported last year to the Parliament of Canada that there should be a moratorium placed on the construction of nuclear power plants because they don't know what to do with the waste. They know the technology isn't safe, and they know what kind of things can happen, Mr. Speaker, with a nuclear power plant.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there's an element of racism attached, however, to this whole issue of the power plant. What we find are members from the opposite side saying, well maybe we'll take a look at the nuclear power plant provided it's not in my constituency. Right? I want to know, Mr. Speaker, of the members who are sitting there tonight, how many people want a power plant, a nuclear power plant, in your constituency? Put your hands up, folks. Put your hands up. Put your hands up. Those who want a nuclear power plant in your constituency, put your hands up. Look, Mr. Speaker, not one, not one of those members put their hands up and said they want a nuclear power plant in their constituency. So I'll ask: you, the member from Rosthern, do you want a nuclear power plant in your constituency, and will the people of Rosthern constituency support having a nuclear power plant?

How about Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, Mr. Speaker? How about the new member from Gravelbourg constituency, Assiniboia-Gravelbourg? Do you want a nuclear power power plant in your constituency? No? No, he says no.

How about the member for Saltcoats, Mr. Speaker? Does he want a nuclear power plant? Yes, how about downtown Esterhazy? No, sir, look at him fidget, Mr. Speaker. He doesn't want a nuclear power plant in his constituency.

Mr. Speaker, we have one member. The member from Redberry has said in this House, so let the record show that the member from Redberry wants a nuclear power

plant in his constituency. Right? He's shaking his head up and down; he says that he wants it, despite the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the nuclear industry in this country and in North America is well-known as a bunch of liars when it comes to the question of safety with nuclear power.

And I refer, Mr. Speaker, to this cover story which appeared October 31, 1988 on the cover of, now was it anti-nuc news, or was it *Environmental News*? No, Mr. Speaker, on the cover of *Time* magazine. What was the headline? Here we have the Charles Zinsers family, believes their son's cancers may have been caused by radiation from the Fernald facility. Fernald is a nuclear weapons facility which uses Saskatchewan uranium to enrich weapons in the weapons cycle, which have had a major leak, which has been closed by the United States government, along with every other nuclear weapons facility in the United States as well as one-third of all nuclear power plants in the United States because of safety reasons.

And what's the title of this cover story? What's the headline say? Mr. Speaker, it says, "They lied to us." Because the nuclear industry in this country, Mr. Speaker, and in North America, will go to any lengths to try to peddle a nuclear power plant. I mean, you look at the headlines in the newspaper and you see why. The president of Atomic Energy Canada Limited is going to lose his job. They're going to tear apart AECL for one reason and one reason only, is that it hasn't sold a nuclear reactor in 10 years.

Because while the nuclear industry can put all their splashy ads on TV, and while there are those who, like the Premier of this province, go around trying to float the trial balloons, and to go and try to float the idea of a nuclear power plant, and try to push this idea even if it's in the back door because they don't have the guts to promote it up front as a program of their party and a program of their government — despite the fact that they're supplying funds to promote that nuclear power plant — because they don't have those guts, Mr. Speaker, they're trying to bring it in the back door. But the people of Saskatchewan, the people of Canada, and the people of North America are awake as to what is happening with the nuclear industry.

They know that the nuclear industry is not safe, Mr. Speaker. They have seen what has happened after Three Mile Island; they saw what happened after Chernobyl. They know what's happening with all the nuclear weapons plants and these kids next door to the facilities getting cancer. They know what kind of destruction and misery a nuclear accident will bring to all the people of this province. And you know, Mr. Speaker, not only do the people of Saskatchewan know, all those other members know. Because with the exception of one, not one of them wants a nuclear power plant in their constituency. Not one, Mr. Speaker, not even one.

(2000)

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province will realize and are realize and have realized the kind of political and economic boondoggles that this government, and the length to which they are prepared to

go to cover up, and to keep from public knowledge, those things which the public ought to have the right to know.

And it saddens me, Mr. Speaker, more than it angers me when I see somebody like the Minister of the Environment having to go to such length to suppress and cover up those things which he knew had to go into the environmental impact statement.

We don't trust this government when it comes to environmental issues. The people of the province don't trust these people; they won't trust them on a nuclear power plant. They're now raising questions as to the efficiency of the environmental review done with the heavy oil upgrader in Regina. We have seen one after another after another accidents with the potential, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you, of causing mass death and destruction in the north end of Regina.

We have a facility constructed in this city in the north end, close to schools, close to residences, that contains hydrogen sulphide, a deadly gas that forms sulphuric acid in your lungs when it's mixed with the right proportion of water. Has that been raised as a public issue by the Minister of the Environment? Were those kind of concerns raised? No, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to wrap up. There is lots and lots of things that I would like to talk about. However, Mr. Speaker, I think it's now time for other members of the House to take part in the debate. But in closing, Mr. Speaker, I issue this challenge to the members on the other side. If you're in favour of a nuclear power plant in your constituency, have the guts to stand up and tell the people of the province what your position is. If you're in favour of having a tax on gambling and the promotion and expansion of gambling in this province, stand up and tell the people of this province what you think. Have the courage to let the people of the province know where you stand on issues.

If you're in favour of a policy of cheap land, and a policy of cheap labour, stand up and let the people of the province know where you stand on the issue. I'm quite prepared, Mr. Speaker, and as I said at the opening of my remarks, I am grateful for the support that the people of Regina Rosemont have given me since I've been elected as a member of the legislature. I am grateful of the kind of open and honest debate I've had with those who may or may not agree with me on this or that issue. But the people of my constituency, Mr. Speaker, know this and they know it clearly, that when it comes to issues they know where I stand. When it comes to issues they know I won't equivocate. When it comes to issues I tell them straight on. And that, Mr. Speaker, is something that I can't say about the members, whether it's the front bench or the back bench of the government opposite, because, Mr. Speaker, the duplicity and corruption of that government are now well known. The duplicity and corruption of that government will be the thing which hastens the sounds of the shovels as it digs the political grave and pushes their long-outmoded political corpses into oblivion. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise before this Assembly to address this year's budget. First of all, I would like to offer my congratulations to the member from Regina, Qu'Appelle for his excellent delivery of this very important budget, a budget which I believe, Mr. Speaker, will prove this government's economic and financial plan is working and will continue to work for the good of the people of this province — a budget, Mr. Speaker, that reinforces the government's commitment to health, education, agriculture, and the environment.

This budget ensures that Saskatchewan's programs in areas such as health and education, for example, remain Canada's finest, and I believe over the next period of years will continue to be Canada's finest; that Saskatchewan will continue to offer health care which is next to none, not only in Canada but around the world.

Mr. Speaker, when I say that, it brings to mind a conversation I had with a couple of young doctors recently who have just moved into our community, who have come from South Africa. They have indicated that the coverage and the programs we have in this province just are unequalled anywhere in the world, and they are amazed at the service that is provided through our health care to the residents, to the people of this province.

I want to emphasize that I said these programs will and continue to remain the finest programs that we have anywhere in the world. We have in place right now many important programs, programs that I feel compelled to outline to this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, this budget builds on what we now have in place.

Mr. Speaker, let me speak about health care. Health care is a good place to start. And I know members opposite would just as soon not have us speak about health care or how we are improving the health care of our province. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this government and this budget reinforce the importance of health care and reinforce the fact that it is the number one priority of this government and will continue to be so.

This budget sees our level of spending for health care at nearly \$1.4 billion. That is an increase of over \$130 million from the previous budget, which adds up to an 11 per cent increase over the last year. When it's all added up, Mr. Speaker, this budget, the budget of health, and the overall budget of the province of Saskatchewan, eats up one-third of the total budget of the province. The level of spending in health, Mr. Speaker, remains unmatched. Mr. Speaker, our health budget has increased 91 per cent since 1981-82. That's an increase of \$678 million. I believe our government stands on its record in health care.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since 1982 we have added 746 new nursing department positions across this province, and a large majority of those positions were allocated to help alleviate the waiting list problems in Saskatoon, many of those waiting lists which we inherited from the opposition when they were in power. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we've been reminded on many occasions of what the member from Saskatoon South has said when he was Health minister of the province; he is quoted as

saying that waiting lists were the sign of an efficient system.

Mr. Speaker, we are continuing . . . will continue to work at cleaning up the mistakes made when the members opposite were sitting on this side of the House. We are also aware of the moratorium that was placed on home care and hospital . . . care home and hospital construction in this province. It might take us a while, Mr. Speaker, but we are continually working and dealing with these problems.

Let me draw an example from March 30, our budget speech. The budget brought down by the member from Qu'Appelle includes \$646 million for nurse and health care support salaries — \$646 million, Mr. Speaker — including, Mr. Deputy Speaker, funding for 370 additional nursing positions. And if you go back to 1982, the positions added total over 1,000 — over 1,000 — statistics that are factual. And yet the member from Regina Centre has the audacity to say that we haven't created any jobs in this budget. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that 370 new nursing positions is nothing to be ignored, nothing to be sneezed at.

This year's budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, sees our government providing over \$64 million for the construction and renovation of hospitals and special care facilities across Saskatchewan. This year we are placing an additional 4.3 million to the \$8 million we provide annually to hospitals for equipment purchases. This 4.3 million was added to enable hospitals to upgrade their equipment and to purchase high-tech equipment to keep astride the latest advances in medical care. This government has always ensured that Saskatchewan keeps in pace with the increased specialization of medical care world-wide.

Look at our centres of excellence. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we can point to the six CAT scans that were introduced into this province, none of which were here prior to 1982. These centres of excellence were built by this government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this budget saw the introduction of a number of taxes which will go toward the support of health care initiatives. The 1 cent per cigarette increase in the tobacco tax — and as the minister was announcing that 1 cent per cigarette increase, one of the members on the opposite side of the House mentioned that he would probably have to quit smoking. We all know that increased taxes are necessary to meet the budget demands, but also, Mr. Speaker, as people decrease the use of alcohol and cigarette smoking, that increases our health and alleviates the distress on our health system.

We also have an increase in the tax on alcoholic beverages, and the new hospitals tax which will apply to lotteries, casinos, and bingos. However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these taxes, along with the 3 cent per litre increase in the rebatable fuel tax only raised 79 per cent of this year's health care allocation, \$130 million increase in our health care budget — only 79 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to share a little bit about education. This budget has also increased funding to education. This

year the allotted sum totals \$841 million, an increase of \$52 million from the '87-88 budget. This amount is necessary to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan have access to top quality schooling and education.

As a rural member of this Legislative Assembly, I am particularly proud of the progress that this Progressive Conservative government has made in the area of education.

A specific example comes to mind, Mr. Speaker: distance education, a very important program for rural Saskatchewan. And I'm reminded of a conversation I had with a couple in the Whitewood area prior to the 1986 election, where a lady who was teaching in Wapella — and I believe she continues to teach there — was asking what the possibilities were of bringing post-secondary education closer to the local level, versus continually being transported into the urban centres to our large technical and universities.

Through this program, regional colleges, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will offer more institute and university programming accessible to all. We are making education accessible to the people of rural Saskatchewan. We are offering to the people of rural Saskatchewan what has, in the past, only been offered or been available to people in urban Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, because we have made education more accessible, we provided an economic option for rural students. Rural students can now keep the jobs in their communities or keep on working on the family farm. They can live at home while taking and attending university, or taking technical institute classes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government recognizes that we must prepare our youth for the future. This year 14.5 million is allotted for special program improvements, programs such as computer technology. This government is expanding access to education in the province through technology and more specifically through SCAN, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Communications Advanced Network.

Through this program, students in remote regions will be able to achieve and receive educational broadcasts by cable television and satellite and therefore upgrade themselves in their education. The proposed start-up date for this project, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is some time in 1990. In the very near future, Mr. Speaker, SCAN will expand educational opportunities for a broad range of students. For example, women and single parents who find it difficult to leave the home will have the opportunity to expand their education. It will help all students who for some reason cannot leave home base. SCAN will ensure these students have access to our educational systems far beyond the public school system.

(2015)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, nearly 31 million is dedicated in this year's budget for the construction and the renovation of schools. In my own constituency of Moosomin we have received almost \$4 million in total government contributions to projects such as these — over \$4 million

since 1982. And that total does not account for renovations and construction that occurred after 1987. Over \$1 million from that total went toward the construction of a new school in Maryfield, a much needed facility, I might add. A \$1.3 million school and this government contributed \$1 million towards its construction. I believe that points to the ... and shows how important education is to this government of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I couldn't hope to cover in this speech every important detail out of this budget, but I would like to mention just one more in the area of education. To assist welfare recipients to obtain job skills training this year, the New Careers Corporation will invest \$5.6 million in training projects all across this province. That is an increase of over 50 per cent, an increase of over 50 per cent towards funds for a very important corporation indeed.

I was in a home this morning, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where a couple have three handicapped adults in their care. They have also a number up there, people around them who are on welfare, and as they heard of the programs, Mr. Speaker, they were saying to me, that is the right thing. We need to give people the opportunity to get out and perform for themselves. And I find most people want to be on their own. There are not too many people who really want to be on social assistance and welfare rolls. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe we as a government will continue to work towards that, to help people find jobs by giving them better skills and better education.

Mr. Speaker, in agriculture as well, this government continues to keep agriculture at the forefront; it continues to be a priority of this government. The budget presented by the member from Regina Qu'Appelle, Mr. Deputy Speaker, provides over \$147 million for the Department of Agriculture and food. The priorities within this department include a number of areas; for example, the strengthening of the family farm and rural communities through diversification. Mr. Speaker, as we look ahead into the future, I believe we will see little manufacturing communities all throughout this province, and we'll begin to manufacture a raw product that now we send to market, instead in the future we'll be sending it ready for the consumer to use. These are new measures that would be directed to help the farm debt problem, the adoption of new farm technology and the list goes on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government is continuing to pursue long-term solutions for the problem of farm debt. We realize that short-term, *ad hoc* programs, as much as they have been helpful, are not the answer. We will continue to work towards long-term solutions to this problem. And I believe every farmer, and every person in the farming community, even from the small-business man in our small rural communities, will appreciate these endeavours.

The unprecedented level of interest rates, combined with the inflationary period of the 1970's and 1980's, created a debt situation which, Mr. Deputy Speaker, threatened a number of our farm families. And when we look back over the past six years, we see a government which has reacted to the situation by implementing a number of

programs and initiatives. Let me list a few. The Farm Land Security Act provided a moratorium on farm foreclosures. It provided producers with the opportunity of a fair review of their financial status. We also provided guarantees for debt consolidation and operating loans for viable producers through the counselling and assistance for farmers. And I talked to a gentleman just recently who has been involved in this counselling and assistance program, and he was mentioning how difficult it is out there, but what a pleasure it is to work together with the farming community and the lending institutions in helping to arrive at agreeable solutions. It is working, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We negotiated the \$2.1 billion federal government special Canadian grains program. And once again the list goes on. I could mention the farm purchase program, the production loan program, and many, many more programs which exemplify how our government is dealing with the problem of farm debts.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many more of my colleagues to speak yet, and I'll leave some of them the opportunity to get into the meat of some of these programs that we have in place and will be bringing into place.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this year the mandate of the agriculture credit corporation will be extended to include a number of initiatives. These include debt refinancing to cover viable farm operations, financing for the home quarter, and necessary farm-related facilities. In fact, since the throne speech and the budget speech presented recently, I've had a number of phone calls already of farmers inquiring as to how these programs are going to work, and I look forward to sending the information out as soon as we have all the dots ... everything covered within the program so that they know what the information is and how they would apply for the programs.

It will also include long-term financing to cover the first year's start-up costs. The current restrictions of the agriculture credit corporation and off-farm income will be removed. This will eliminate any disadvantage to those farmers with off-farm income.

And over the period of years since I've been elected as a member of this Legislative Assembly, I have been approached by many men and women in the situation where they had agreed with agriculture credit to take out a loan and within five years become fully viable in the farming operation, that their off-farm income — they would get out of their off-farm job and allow someone else to have that job.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are aware of the hardships within the agricultural sector. We are aware that many farmers, if they had to leave that off-farm income, just wouldn't make it possible right now for them to continue farming. And so I believe this is going to be a very good program, will be an advantage to many producers in helping them to set up their farming operations, so that indeed down the road they can be full-time, aggressive, young farmers.

In this budget, 29 million was provided from the

agriculture development fund. This includes 22 million for agricultural research and development, as well as 7.7 million for irrigation grants to farmers, agricultural biotechnology, and food processing and commercialization.

Mr. Speaker, when we were able to stand here and list all the programs, it's very easy to just get a little excited, and realizing that we are attempting to meet the needs of the young farmer, the middle-aged farmer, and not only the farm families but the men and women of our small communities, because everyone in this province still relates a lot to agriculture.

I've only touched a few subjects in the agricultural sector, and again, Mr. Speaker, I go on to another area that really I enjoy talking about and that's seniors. Let me speak for a moment about one important group within our society; that important group is our seniors, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Our government has increased funding for special care homes by 67.7 per cent since 1982-83, and this is directly relevant to our seniors. It is relevant because out of the 10,000 long-care home beds we have in Saskatchewan, 9,200 of them are occupied by seniors — 92 per cent of those beds. And the majority of those seniors are over 80 years old.

In fact, relating, in a conversation I had this morning with some constituents, and also mindful of the number of congratulatory messages I have sent out, it amazes me at the number of seniors we have who are 80 years, 90 years, and in fact I have a number of seniors within my constituency who are going to be celebrating their 100th birthday this year, Mr. Speaker. I think that speaks well of our care, not only in health, but through help in the home and through help through our care homes.

It was interesting talking to a gentleman this morning who had been into the care home and talking to a 92-year-old individual in the care home. And as he said, as they were talking, this gentleman said to him, remember that shot I made when we were curling 30-some years ago? I reminded the constituent I was talking to, I bet you don't remember the shot you made yesterday, and they were talking about shots made 30 years ago.

In my own constituency I have seen our government contribute directly to our seniors. In fact, recently the community of Maryfield was a recipient of an innovative housing project through Sask Housing. And next week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will be opening a seniors' enriched housing project in Kennedy.

There again, and I can't help but get back to another conversation I had this morning about a 92-year-old gentleman who moved out of the house he was born in — 92 years he lived in the same house. He was born in that house, he lived there for 92 years, he is now moving into this enriched seniors' housing project in Kennedy, looking forward to it, 92 years young. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think if we feel all that spry at 92 years, we'll be all doing very well.

I'm proud of these projects, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They help people remain close to home, and that's what I'm

finding for most people, from our seniors, from our families; they want to keep their families closer to home, and I'm proud that we as a government can offer them that opportunity.

I've also enjoyed working with the people of Kennedy and Maryfield in helping them put together their proposals and indeed get the projects finalized for their communities. The total cost of the project in Maryfield, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is \$750 million. And would you believe that of the 750 million, 400 million — pardon me, 750,000 — that would build a lot of homes, wouldn't it. That \$750,000, and of that 750,000, 400,000 was contributed by our government. You know where the other \$300,000 came from? It's coming from the community through community involvement.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are people out in rural Saskatchewan who are willing to not only beg and ask and seek government for help, but they're willing to do a little bit to help themselves. And it's just been a pleasure working with people like Sybil McGarva in Maryfield, in helping her put this project together, a dream that she had a number of years ago and now she's seeing it coming to fruition. That money ensures that a number of the seniors are able to live, to live independently in Maryfield. And I can tell you I appreciate this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know that the people in the constituency of Moosomin appreciate it as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, allow me to speak about a group I have a tender heart for, and that group of people are the handicapped. Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government recognizes the potential of, and the contributions, handicapped individuals make in our communities. Again, centres located in my constituency reflect our government's commitment to handicapped individuals. And I'm referring specifically to the Pipestone Kin-Ability Centre, incorporated in Moosomin, and the Kipling and District Association for Handicapped Adults, incorporated in Kipling. The Pipestone Kin-Ability Centre just recently made a move into a brand-new facility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 1982 the PC Party of Saskatchewan was elected government of this province. In 1983 the people of Moosomin, who have been working for a long time to get an activity centre involved and brought to fruition in their community, finally received it. And how did they receive it? They had acquired an old liquor board store in Moosomin, and they've been there up until, I believe it was September of 1988, when they moved into their new facility. And they were able to acquire this old store by the help of this government, through the help of this government, the Kinsmen Foundation, and the people of that community.

In 1988, Mr. Speaker, this government facilitated their move out of that old liquor store into the brand-new facility that I mentioned just seconds ago, by providing them with \$110,000 in capital funding. And not only that, we provided them with \$9,500 in operating costs, and I'm happy to announce that the budget presented by the Finance minister also proposed an allotment from this government of an operating budget for the Pipestone Kin-Ability Centre of \$75,000.

Mr. Speaker, this is a commitment to the handicapped. This is commitment to people who are less fortunate than we are — individuals who, through no fault of their own, just aren't able to obtain the same purposes in life that you and I have. Mr. Speaker, \$75,000 is nothing to be sneezed at, and I know the people of Moosomin are more than happy and are very happy to have the Kinsmen to be involved in providing that service to their community. I am proud of what this government is doing for my constituency.

(2030)

And then there's a project in Kipling, and let me just go into this a little bit. The proposed funding for the Kipling and district association for '89-90 is \$53,730. This facility commenced operations this year, Mr. Speaker. It is a brand-new facility. For the first two months it was opened this year, our government provided them with \$8,600 in operating money to cover February and March 1988.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was involved quite heavily in working towards a handicapped centre in the community of Kipling. And whenever you come to government it takes a while to get everything in place. You have to . . . You help the people put their proposal together and realize that many communities around this province are looking for the same type of facility. But what really amazed me and really pleased me about the group in Kipling was their willingness to go the extra mile. And they believed so much in those less fortunate in their community that back in June of this year a building came available, they formed a committee after they had approached Social Services, and I had mentioned to them, well maybe we should start by looking at a SARCAN depot. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, working with Social Services, working with SARC (Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres), we were able to obtain the funding to put in place a SARCAN depot. That was the start of the handicapped centre in Kipling.

And now today we have a handicapped centre that is going to house 14 adults — 17 adults all told, young adults. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the commitment of that community was \$65,000 in which I believe we had 10 individuals write notes to take out the funding to purchase a building to start the facility. And just the other day I noticed on the front page of the *Kipling Citizen*, the Kin-Ability foundation and a group from Broadview presented a cheque for \$5,000. That was the last of the money needed to pay for that \$65,000 loan taken to buy the building. And you know who paid for the rest? It was the R.M.s and the communities and individuals right around the area who really believed in their handicapped adults. And you know it's really, indeed, pleasing to go into a facility such as this.

I walked into the depot one day, these two young fellows, Lloyd and Darcy, just beaming as they're throwing these cans in this crusher. They're just as happy as can be. And Lloyd comes over to me and he says, you know, Mr. Toth, he said, the belt broke here and no one was around to fix it and . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The members aren't to use members names.

Mr. Toth: — Sorry. I apologize, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I don't know how else you address yourself. But anyway, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this young gentleman came to me and he said, you know it was . . . He was just beaming from ear to ear as he was telling me how he fixed this belt, and when I walked in there and Darcy was just so proud, it's just a pleasure to see these individuals feeling at home, whereas before they were off by themselves on the farm or in a corner where no one had a chance to associate with them. I am more than proud to have two facilities such as this in my constituency.

Mr. Speaker, let me address another program, the home program, a program initiated by this government, a program which created over 300 jobs for my constituency alone. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the home program. Through that program 3,909 grants have been approved just in the constituency of Moosomin alone. These grants total \$3,462,080. And also we have the 6 per cent 10-year loans. And in my constituency we have 648 loans that have been approved to date, which total \$4,458,714.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you look at my constituency, those would be staggering amounts. You think, well that's a lot of money — a lot of economic development. Mr. Deputy Speaker, where did that money go? It went directly to the people of my constituency.

And it's indeed interesting talking to small contractors, talking to the lumber yards, talking to the professionals, talking to the business trades in my constituency. And there isn't a one of them will not indicate and will not tell me that the activity they've seen in the last two and a half years was far beyond their expectations. With the drought, with the slow-down in the farming economy, with the lack of economic activity in the agricultural sector, they were expecting to have some lean years. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this home program has certainly given them something to be happy about, and they are more than thankful that this government was willing to put in place a program that would help people, indeed help themselves and reach out and help others.

People in this province also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are concerned about interest rates, but they know that here they are protected. They know that the Premier of this province, the member from Estevan, and this government will continue to speak out on interest rates. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we not only speak out, but we act. We are willing to put the treasure of this province behind the residents of this province in protecting them against high interest rates.

My constituents, along with the rest of the people in this province, are protected by the home improvement loan which gives 6 per cent money. And we all are aware of the home mortgage loan. They know that their mortgage interest rates will never go above nine and three-quarter per cent. Where else do you get a better interest rate in buying a new home? Our government has ensured that this will never happen — nine and three-quarter per cent interest rates. I am proud that our government is protecting the people of this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one other area that we know raises a lot of concerns in people's minds, and the member from Regina Rosemont mentioned it a few minutes earlier, is the environment. And everyone of us has been glued to our TVs, or been watching the news, or have noticed in the media the problems that have been created by the Exxon Valdez running aground just off Alaska. And we've seen, we've been reminded of the problems that danger and the pollution in our environment can cause.

And I'm glad to say that this government has announced that we will work towards protection of the environment. The protection of our environment remains an important priority for our government; it remains an important priority, not only for us today, but for our children, and our children's children of tomorrow.

This year over \$22 million is allotted to fund initiatives that will preserve and enhance the environment. They spanned from hazardous waste management to pest eradication. Protecting water quality for our people, to the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment are covered through this budget, and through the throne speech that we presented earlier on this year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is our government's intention to ensure that the past mistakes and omissions of previous Saskatchewan governments are not repeated. We will continue to take positive action to preserve Saskatchewan's natural environment for the benefit and enjoyment of our current and future generations.

And talking . . . and speaking about families, and speaking about future generations, let me remind you as well that families do matter, that families matter to this government; families matter in this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are allocating in this budget \$60 million under the first year of our comprehensive child care development plan, including \$3 million in new funding for child care. The plan will double the number of child care spaces in this province to almost 12,000 by 1995. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the requirements of rural parents will not be forgotten; they will be recognized as well, as 2,000 of these spaces will be located in rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a total of 680,000 in new funding has been provided to open two family support centres. These multi-service facilities will include family treatment and counselling. They will provide parent education and child development training. They will also include accommodation for victims of families, family violence, as well as outreach and crisis intervention. Extremely necessary services, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, many of my colleagues have yet to rise to address this budget. And I am confident that the areas that I was unable to cover will be dealt with very adequately by my colleagues.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this budget reflects our government's commitment to health, agriculture, education, the environment, and the family. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am happy to inform you that I will be

supporting this budget, and I urge all members of this Assembly to do so as well. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Before I begin my remarks on the budget speech, I want to congratulate the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg who was recently elected in the by-election prior to Christmas. In particular, I want to congratulate him because I know that the people of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, particularly the people in his home town, are waiting with a great deal of anticipation for this member to deliver on an number of commitments that were made in that riding.

I know that the people in Rockglen are looking forward to a recreation centre, a new nursing home, and economic development. And of course they're expecting a new highway between the town of Assiniboia and Rockglen. I also know that the people in Gravelbourg are waiting for an integrated facility, and I wish him great luck in living up to the tremendous expectations that he has cultivated. I'll be interested in seeing whether or not the provincial government in its budget will live up to those commitments that were made during that by-election.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wasn't able to participate in the throne speech debate, but I did listen to the throne speech debate, and again to the budget debate. I listened for some indication that the Government of Saskatchewan would come to grips with the problems and difficulties facing our province. I listened for some indication that the government would come forward with some positive solutions, meaningful solutions that would lift the feeling of hopelessness and pessimism that seems to be engulfing the minds and hearts of our fellow citizens.

Sadly, this government has offered no specific policy initiatives and no real commitments to the people of Saskatchewan. And I have listened to the members on that side of the House articulate their vision of the throne speech and what they think the budget speech means to them, and it made me feel as though I was listening to a bunch of bureaucrats. They trotted out numbers; they trotted out figures; they didn't say it with any passion; they didn't say it with any kind of emotion; they really didn't articulate their vision of Saskatchewan.

In the throne speech, this government talked about opportunities, they talked about public participation, they talked about diversifying our economy, but they also came up with some new buzz-words. And it's interesting that they tried to soften the jargon a bit this year. They talked about the future on 12 occasions in the throne speech; they talked about co-operation and acting co-operatively on 14 occasions; they talked about protecting us on 11 occasions; then they used some words like "excellence," "new era," "new state of the art," "innovations," and "long-term." Now these people are good at the buzz-words, they're good at the jargon, but they really aren't good at articulating a vision that has some compassion and some care. These people aren't good at that at all.

Now I'm pleased to be able to enter into this budget speech. I'm pleased because I'm able to be here because the people of my constituency have given me the privilege and the responsibility to be their spokesperson on the important issues confronting them as taxpayers and confronting our province.

Since first becoming an MLA in 1986, I have been given many opportunities in this legislature to voice the concerns of the people back home in Saskatoon Nutana. I've enjoyed speaking out on issues in the legislature, and it's been a wonderful experience for me personally being able to articulate some of the concerns.

(2045)

But for me the most important and enjoyable part of my job as a member of the legislature is the kinds of things I do back at home in my constituency. I know that there are many MLAs in this Assembly that have helped senior citizens fill out their heritage grant forms, or they've gone to the Workers' Compensation Board appeal on behalf of constituents, or they've done Social Services appeals, they've phoned the hospitals and the cancer clinics to find out where their constituents were on the waiting lists. I know that they've attended community meetings helping community groups lobby for particular projects in their particular constituency.

But recently, Mr. Minister, I've had the opportunity to become involved in the farm crisis. And I think many people in this legislature know that I have a rural background, but I do represent an urban riding.

Now it's interesting that I have literally had dozens of farm families, young farm families in my constituency office, talking to me about the prospect of facing bankruptcy and foreclosures. They've come to see me because, I suspect, that they've been unwilling to talk to their own members of the legislature. And as you know, most rural constituencies are represented by Tory MLAs. They've been afraid to talk to their members of the legislature, and I suspect it's because they've been a bit embarrassed and they really, in many respects, blame themselves for their pending foreclosure or bankruptcy. I have shared a great many tears with men and women who are facing the prospect of losing their family farm, and in some ways I've shared a great deal of joy.

Now this government talks about protecting the people, and they talk about protecting farm families and all of us. They say they're going to co-operate with the people of Saskatchewan. Well, at this stage in our history, no one believes you. You can talk in all the bureaucracies that you want, you can talk about compassion and care, but at this stage no one believes you.

They don't believe that you protect them; they think you destroy them. They don't believe that you are co-operators; they think you're privatizers. They don't think you're interested in their future because you use the same old Conservative schemes from the past. You're still into *laissez-faire* capitalism, the free market place, unbridled capitalism. You people are the trickle-down folks. You feed your friends at the front end, and maybe the people at the back end will get some crumbs.

Well, my friends, unbridled capitalism has never worked, it's not working now, and I think you should soon come to terms with that. Now during the Ronald Reagan era, which you people like to talk about, 650,000 farm families in the United States gave up farming; 55,000 farm implement workers lost their jobs; farm gate prices fell by 50 per cent; retail food prices, on the other hand, went up by 36 per cent. The multinationals and the grain traders recorded massive profits, yet farmers and workers are worse off. And with this record the Tory government has just tied the Canadian people to the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement.

Now why is it that the farmers' economic position has been eroding during the 1980s? Why is it that the quality of life in rural communities has deteriorated? Why is it that the quality of food offered in grocery stores has deteriorated, as has the quality of water, air, and soil? This, my friends, has happened because of the free market policies of Conservative governments, both in Canada and the United States, the pursuit of profit at the expense of people; and that's the free market system, and that's the system that you people have tied yourself to.

The U.S., which you have just tied yourselves to in the free trade agreement, has consistently used food as a weapon, and it's particularly evident in the current round of international trade negotiations and in the Canada-U.S. trade agreement. The American government policy of expanding exports by driving down the grain prices benefits multinational corporations like Cargill, but it sure hurts farmers in our country and in Saskatchewan.

The U.S. government's objective is to break the European Economic Community, and in the process, members of the legislature, Saskatchewan farmers are being eliminated. Conservative governments support free market farm policy. Farmers don't need any more trial runs with the free market system. We've seen the pinnacle of the free market economics in the 1930s when prices were so low it cost more to ship your grain than it was worth. Simply increasing exports doesn't guarantee prosperity for Canadian farmers and Saskatchewan farmers. Entering into a free trade agreement with the Americans won't guarantee the survival of the family farm.

Now what farmers need is a predictable rate of return. And New Democrats in the last federal election put forward our policy position, that *ad hoc* deficiency payments and drought payments at election time aren't good enough — they're simply not good enough any more.

We have suggested that farmers should be guaranteed the U.S. target price of \$5.28 a bushel on the first 8,000 bushels of wheat. And I use wheat as an example, but all crops are included. Above the 8,000 bushel level there's a predictable stabilization program with price being guaranteed at a long-term average. The program would put some stability and predictability back in agriculture. That's our policy on farm income, and I ask my friends opposite: that's our policy; what's yours? We haven't seen it here in the legislature.

Now New Democrats also believe that the Farm Credit Corporation should become the farmers' bank. Right now farmers can't service their debt, and they're going down the tubes, literally, in droves. We think the first \$125,000 of farm debt should have a long-term interest rate of below 8 per cent. The next \$125,000 should be set aside with no interest debt accumulated. This policy initiative, Mr. Deputy Speaker, gives farmers some hope of eventually working their way to becoming a viable farming operation. Now that's our solution to farm debt, but what's yours?

Equity financing, friends, won't help those who need the most help, but a farmers' bank will. Added to these policies is an agricultural position that would protect farm income from disasters. Built into our income stability program is a provision that would deal with disasters. If a farmer traditionally produced up to 8,000 bushels of wheat, for example, and in a year of drought or grasshoppers or floods or other disasters the crop was lost, that farmer would be guaranteed that 8,000 bushels at the U.S. target price of \$5.28 a bushel. Now that's our farm policy. What's yours?

Now once again we would have predictability and stability in the system. And *ad hoc* political expedience at election time would be gone, and gone for ever. Quite frankly, my friends opposite, people are sick and tired of you playing games with them at election time. They want stability and they want predictability. They don't want you people playing politics with their future and their survival.

Now I speak about rural Saskatchewan because I've had the opportunity to spend a great deal of time in rural Saskatchewan in the last few months. Rural people are facing a disaster. This government in this budget has recognized that disaster by taking into consideration enrolment declines of school students. Rural schools are facing serious decreases in enrolment. And what sort of an impact does that have on the people that are remaining in that community? It means that fewer and fewer people are left to pick up where those people who have moved out have left off. Those people are expected to pay their taxes to pay for those schools. Those people are expected to pay the taxes to pay for all of the important infrastructure in rural Saskatchewan.

Now you people talk a good line about being friends of the family farmer, but quite frankly people don't believe you any more. They don't believe you. They think that you've sold them out for your big business friends. Now there's no question that prior to 1982 and afterwards you people have been friends to people in rural Saskatchewan. You've tried to, I suppose in some ways, do what you could with your philosophies, but unbridled capitalism doesn't work, and I think you people know that.

And I wish that you'd get your heads out of the sand and come up with a proper rural development strategy that would ensure the Saskatchewan farm families will still be in rural Saskatchewan, because it's the young people that are going down the tubes. And you people can pay lip service to that; you people can talk about farm families,

but the people out in rural Saskatchewan know what's going on, and people are leaving rural Saskatchewan because of the crisis in agriculture.

Now this Progressive Conservative government has now put itself in its eighth year. When any government is elected, people put their hopes and dreams on the line. They really believe that that government's going to do something for them. They look for all kinds of things in government, but mostly they want fairness and competence, and they want some hope.

In 1982 the people of Saskatchewan gave the men and women opposite an overwhelming mandate to govern our province. They wanted positive, progressive progress, and over the long years the Government of Saskatchewan has gone from being a positive group of men and women to a group of negative, regressive people. People regularly tell me that you people are literally destroying Saskatchewan.

They tell me that you're the wrecking crew, that there's going to be nothing left when we get to government. And I want to assure the people of Saskatchewan who are listening tonight, that when Tommy Douglas came to office in 1944 we had a serious debt in this province, but CCF governments and New Democrat governments got rid of that debt, and we put our people to work, and we had balanced budgets, and we gave people hope in Saskatchewan — and New Democrat governments will do that again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Today the province's combined funds have total assets of \$7.9 billion and total liabilities of \$10.9 billion. If everything in this province, every public asset in this province, was sold and all of the debt paid off and all of the taxes up to date, we'd still be flat broke and we'd owe \$3 billion. That's how much we'd owe.

This year the government projects that we will receive the largest ever equalization payment from the federal government. The estimate is \$440 million. Equalization payments have traditionally gone to provinces that are have-not provinces. Saskatchewan people have taken a great deal of pride in the fact that we haven't been a have-not province. But we can't take pride in that any more. The PC government's incompetence has put us on hand-outs from Ottawa. That's what you guys have put us on — we're getting hand-outs from Ottawa.

In fact, next to personal income tax of \$869 million, sales tax of \$502.6 million, this federal hand-out is the third largest revenue item in this year's budget of four billion eighty-three thousand dollars in the revenues that our province will collect. The equalization payment from Ottawa is embarrassing. This once proud, rich province is now on hand-outs. Can you believe that? And that has occurred under the great leadership of the members opposite.

These people who think they're business people, these people who think they're business people couldn't even run a popcorn stand and keep the books balanced. And Mr. Minister, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the PCs have once

again imposed unfair taxes . . . tax increases on Saskatchewan people while they've actually reduced the tax load on big business. In 1988 Canadian big business had a 59 per cent increase in corporate profits, yet the Saskatchewan PC government reduced corporate income taxes by 2 per cent. No such reduction happened for individual taxpayers. No such reduction happened for the working people and the small merchants and the farmers of our province.

With this budget, for every one dollar bill individuals pay, corporate Canada, corporate Saskatchewan, will pay only 17 cents. And if you people think that's fair, you have another think coming. People want fairness in government and you people aren't giving it to them.

Now since the men and women opposite took office, corporate taxes have increased by \$136 million, but taxes on individuals have increased by more than \$560 million. And I should point out that the Finance minister is famous for overestimating corporate income tax when it comes to the budget estimates. In fact, in 1986-87 he estimated that the province would collect \$162 million in corporate income taxes, but when the *Public Accounts* were tabled, his government had only collected \$118.8 million — another booboo by the Minister of Finance.

(2100)

Now in 1985-86 this government estimated that corporate taxes would account for about \$145.2 million worth of revenue, but once again they had another booboo — they only collected 129.4 million. And I somehow find it odd and strange and in many ways amusing how this government doesn't have any trouble being right on the money when it comes to individual income taxes — they seem to be able to estimate that okay, but when it comes to corporate income tax, they always overestimate the amount of revenue that they will collect from corporate income taxes. They're right on the money when it comes to people like us who pay individual taxes, but when it comes to corporate corporations and what they'll pay, they always overestimate.

Now the latest gas tax increase will hurt Saskatchewan drivers, and in particular those drivers with older vehicles. And who do those drivers tend to be? Well those people are people who aren't in the financial position to buy a new car. Those are the people that have to drive old cars because they can't afford anything newer. So once again this government is shifting the burden of taxation off of large corporations that have had massive profits and putting it on to the backs of low and middle income earners.

Now the gas tax will also hurt small business, school boards, municipalities, cab drivers, and small locally-owned trucking companies. This latest gas tax increase is a betrayal of Saskatchewan people. The conservative government in 1982 promised the people of our province that they would totally eliminate the gas tax, and the people opposite have broken that promise, and they have betrayed the people of Saskatchewan. They have made a promise and they have broken that promise.

Now for those taxpayers who have a dependant spouse at home and two children and a gross income of \$40,000, Saskatchewan now has the honour of having the third-highest level of provincial income tax in Canada. And all of this comes from a government that in 1982 promised to reduce personal income taxes by 10 per cent. And instead, Mr. Speaker, each year under their leadership and management of our province, they have increased personal income taxes, and in fact they imposed the 2 per cent unfair flat tax on Saskatchewan individuals and families.

I find it somewhat sad and in fact surprising that this government, at a time when there is a major job crisis in Saskatchewan, had nothing to say about job creation programs and new job opportunities for Saskatchewan people. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they cut the student employment program, Opportunities '89 by 22 per cent, or some 1,000 jobs. I would encourage the members opposite, if you have any compassion, any heart left, to reinstitute the program criteria so that non-government organizations and local municipalities could, in fact, apply to hire young people this summer.

I know that the non-government organizations in my own constituency like crisis intervention, Big Sisters, the Tamarack Foundation, and many, many others, the Broadway Merchants' Association, would welcome the opportunity to be able to apply for funds available under that program. They would welcome the opportunity to give young people a meaningful job this summer. They'd welcome the opportunity to give young people the job experience that will be necessary when they leave university and technical school and get out there on their own.

Now these are hard times for Saskatchewan young people — they are hard times. Over 17 per cent of our young people are unemployed. And the unemployment rate will get even higher this summer as students leave university and technical schools. In my opinion, the young people of Saskatchewan deserved a whole lot more from you people in this budget.

I'd also like to turn to another critical issue facing Saskatchewan, and that's in the area of educational spending. The headlines in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* read on last Friday, "Education spending up 6.6 per cent to \$841 million", and those are pretty heady headlines. But I want to examine what has really happened to educational spending in our province.

This budget has only increased educational spending in our province by 2.37 per cent, and not the 6.6 per cent the Tories have indicated. If you include the supplementary spending estimates from last year and you take out the additional payments to the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, which has nothing to do with educational spending in Saskatchewan, you discover that educational spending has only increased by 2.37 per cent. And that, members opposite, is a cut in spending, because when you take into consideration an inflation rate in excess of 4 per cent, the school boards across Saskatchewan have, in fact, along with universities and post-secondary institutions, received a cut in spending.

Now grants to school boards from the provincial government as a percentage of total school board revenue has fallen significantly under the Tory administration. In 1982 the province's share amounted to about 54.6 per cent of total spending on education. In 1982 total board expenditures was about \$572 million. And the boards, the school boards in Saskatchewan received in total about \$312 million from the province.

In 1987, the last year that I have figures available, total school board expenditures were \$786.6 million, and the provinces paid boards about \$392.4 million. The province's percentage share has dropped to less than 50 per cent. And in response to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what have school boards had to do? They've had to pass on that revenue shortfall to individual property owners. They've had to dip into their reserves. They've had to increase student-teacher ratios, and in some cases, Mr. Deputy Speaker, school boards have had to cut teachers and cut programs.

There's another thing that the members opposite should be mindful of. Since you have come to government in 1982, a lot of responsibilities have shifted to school boards and teachers. They are now expected to take on roles that have not traditionally been the roles that they've served in Saskatchewan. Because of the economic crisis in our province, and because of family stress, schools have taken on the jobs of food banks, social work, family counselling, and pre-school intervention programs, to name a few. Yet your government hasn't increased funding for these additional roles.

You will argue, no doubt, the Minister of Education will argue that the provincial grants have kept pace with inflation. But there have been added costs for school boards in their attempt to provide education to Saskatchewan students. There have been real cost increases above inflation, but your government has failed to recognize those increased costs, and I would urge you to do so.

Another thing that I'd like to talk about in terms of education — prior to becoming a member of the legislature, I had the opportunity to be the principal of a school in Saskatoon called Radius Tutoring project. And it was a school that allowed young people who couldn't fit into the regular school system to continue their education, to try and get their grade 12. Under the provincial government, and it's quite interesting, a study has just shown that under this provincial government, since 1980-81, the Saskatchewan grade eight to 12 drop-out rate has increased from about 31 per cent in 1986-87, the last year for these kinds of figures to be available, to 45 per cent. Now that's a substantial increase.

In 1980-81, for every 100 students in our grades 8 to 12, 69 of those students were expected to receive their grade 12. That means that 31 per cent were dropping out. In 1986-87, under your government, 45 per cent of those students are expected to leave school early. That means, members opposite, that only 54 per cent of students between grade 8 and 12 will actually complete their grade 12 education, that 45 per cent of all grade 8 to 12 students in our province will drop out. That, members

opposite, is a tragedy.

Under your government the school drop-out rate has increased by 50 per cent. Under your government we have gone from a drop-out rate of 31 per cent to 45 per cent. Now what do we do about it.

The Minister of Education will probably deny those figures. He will say, well those are native children, or he will say that they're drug and alcohol addicted young people. The point is, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if those young people are drug and alcohol addicted, native people, rural people, city people, black people, white people, green people, red people, it doesn't matter. The point is that those young people are dropping out of school, and we have to figure out what we're going to do about it. Obviously those young people are feeling frustrated and alienated from their present school situation. Obviously some of these young people believe that they don't have any future. What we need to do is move immediately to introduce preventive programs that will keep young people in school.

Now under your government leadership we have seen hungry children in Saskatchewan. We have seen kids that don't have enough to eat, and you people will say, well their parents are out at the bingo parlours, or their parents are drinking, or their parents are doing this or that, but it doesn't matter. Because if we don't begin to do something about it now, we certainly are going to have to pay for it in the future. Those young people are not going to have the skills necessary, as the Minister of Education says, to beat the requirements of the 21st century. Those young people are going to be the future people in our jails, the future people on our social assistance rolls, the future people that have no hope, and so we have to figure out what are we going to do.

Now you people talk about welfare reform, cutting back on welfare, that somehow this is going to make people responsible, that they're going to get out there and find a job. But reality tells us that there aren't very many jobs in Saskatchewan, and if you're a single woman with a couple of children, a minimum wage job, if you're unskilled, is all you're going to get, and it's not going to be enough to meet the requirements of your family.

When you people . . . every time you make a cut in some sort of social service, you're affecting young people in this province. You're affecting families. There are reasons why the drop-out rate has increased by over 50 per cent under your leadership, under your government, and I think it's time you came to terms with some of those reasons. It's time that you realized that when people don't have enough to eat, and they don't have a decent place to live, and they don't have decent clothing, they're not necessarily going to go to school. If people don't have enough rest and good nutrition, they're not going to have the kinds of things necessary to make them good students.

You people continue to blame the victims, the victims of our economic system. But those victims, my friends, are the people that we're all going to have to pay for down the road unless you start to do something about it now. We need to move

immediately to reinstate some of the social programs that you have cut. We need to move immediately to ensure that the people of our province have enough to eat. And that may mean that somewhere along the line you people are going to have to increase the welfare rates.

We need a major research project in this province to find out why it is that young people are leaving Saskatchewan early or leaving school early. We need to know, what do we have to do to reintegrate those that have left the school system. We need to know what kind of ramifications the core curriculum will have in terms of students completing grade 12, because you talk about compulsory subjects and you talk about back to the basics. We need to know whether smaller class-room sizes would allow more individual attention to ensure that young people are staying in school. And maybe we need some more alternative programs where we can change the atmosphere of school. Not all kids fit into the regular school system; some kids need a flexible school environment. Schools may have to become more flexible in order to keep young people in school.

I want to turn to another issue and that's the issue of teen pregnancy. It has recently come to the attention of Saskatchewan citizens that once again Saskatchewan leads the nation when it comes to the rate of teen pregnancy in our province.

(2115)

Well this government has done a good job of moralizing and telling people that they should be not engaged in any kind of activity that would lead to teen pregnancy. They've ensured that there's no birth control information available in any of the public health offices. They've ensured that the drug plan has been cut to such an extent that it now costs a person 12 to \$13 a month, I believe, to obtain any kind of birth control, and yet our teen pregnancy rate is going up.

We have 11- and 12-year-olds in Saskatchewan that are getting pregnant. Before I came into this legislature, I worked with teen mothers, young girls who were pregnant. When I was working with those young women in 1984-85 there were 13- and 14-year-olds getting pregnant, and I thought that was terrible. When I ran for election in 1982 I did so because I felt it was important that we have programs to ensure that those teen mothers were staying in school, ensuring that those teen mothers were getting their education so that they would not be put onto the rolls of the welfare system.

And I must admit, Mr. Speaker, that my own government, prior to 1982, could have done a better job of dealing with the teen pregnancy rate in Saskatchewan, but we didn't. I remember, for instance, in Alberta they had a program called TERRA (The Association For Assistance To Unwed Mothers) for teen mothers and their children. They were able to go to school; the day care was at that school; they were able to complete their education. But under this government you've seen all kinds of cuts in services to young people. We have to come to grips with this. It's a tragedy when 11- and 12-year-olds are having babies in Saskatchewan. It's a situation that can't be allowed to continue.

Now what are we going to do about it? We can bury our heads in the sand and say it doesn't happen — that this doesn't happen in our province. But it does — it does. And it's going to continue to happen until such time as people and young people have access to quality information, information that's based on fact. It's going to continue until they have factual information.

Now I know that this government has been struggling with a sex education or family life education program for some time. And I know it's a difficult struggle. I know that there are parents around Saskatchewan and school board people and trustees and directors and teachers that aren't comfortable with the prospect of having this kind of information taught to our children in schools.

But I think we have to provide some leadership. It means that we have to be honest and factual with the people of Saskatchewan. We have to say to Saskatchewan people, 11-year-olds and 12-year-olds are getting pregnant. We have to say to people that we have the highest teen-age pregnancy rate in the country, and we've got to come to grips with that problem. It means that we have to educate ourselves to ensure that we have the information so that our young people can have the information. It's not acceptable that young people are getting their sexuality information from their peers because their peers aren't necessarily . . . they don't necessarily have all the facts on the subject.

I think it's incumbent upon the Minister of Education, all members of the legislature, to work with our communities to ensure that our schools and our young people have access to that factual information to lower the teen pregnancy rate in Saskatchewan. We've got to do that, and we've got to do it very soon.

Because the teen mothers are the ones, along with a whole host of other kids, that are dropping out of school early. They're dropping out of school early. They are part of that 50 per cent increase in the dropout rate in Saskatchewan. We can stick our heads in the sand, or we can do something about it. And I would welcome the opportunity, and I know my colleague, the critic for health, would welcome the opportunity to work with the Minister of Education and work with the Minister of Health to ensure that our young people in Saskatchewan have access to factual information so that we can prevent teen pregnancy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — The next think I want to talk about is about this recent study on AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). We have a study that was recently commissioned and done by the Queen's University at Kingston on Canada Youth and AIDS Study Saskatchewan Report. What this report tells us, Mr. Speaker, is that 53 per cent of grade 11 students in our province are sexually active — 53 per cent. In fact, we're above the national average. I find that disturbing.

This report also talks about where these young people get their information on AIDS. As we all know, AIDS kills, AIDS kills people. And yet if you look at this report, the young people who have been surveyed indicate that they

are behaving in such a manner that they are the prime candidates for something like AIDS. And where did they get their information? They get it from their peers, they get it from the streets, but they're not getting it from schools.

I think this is tied into the whole thing of teen pregnancy, sexual activity, and AIDS. But once again, it's no longer . . . We're not being responsible if we don't ensure that our young people have access to this kind of information. And once again, I know my colleague, the critic of Health, and myself, the Education critic, would welcome the opportunity to work with the Minister of Health and work with the Education minister to ensure that our young people in our schools have access to factual information on AIDS. I would welcome that opportunity because if we don't, once again, if we continue to stick our heads in the sand, we're putting our young people in a position where they will continue their behaviour and they, in fact, are at a great deal of risk.

The final thing I want to talk about in this budget speech is the whole area of privatization. Now in March of 1988, the minister of privatization, Graham Taylor, published what he called the "objectives and guide-lines of the PC privatization strategy". And he stated that the privatization strategy or policy of the government would have the objective of ensuring that Saskatchewan people receive three things: they'd receive full benefit from the use of public assets to increase employment and create economic and investment opportunity; second thing, increased opportunities for personal employee ownership; and three, the minister of privatization said that there would be a more effective and efficient public service, a good value for their money.

I want to talk about what's happened in Saskatchewan. I regularly hear these people say that they don't want governments to own things. These people are the free enterprisers, they don't want to be involved in government ownership, and we on this side of the House are the government ownership types.

I want to remind all members of the legislature that governments own absolutely nothing. You own nothing. The people of this province own the highways; they own the provincial government buildings; they own the liquor stores; they own the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan; they own Saskatchewan Power Corporation; they own Saskatchewan Government Insurance; they own hospitals; they own schools; they own SaskTel. You people own nothing. Governments own nothing. It's not yours; it's all of ours.

Your job is to act as a shepherd of the public assets, sort of like the shepherds who are looking after the sheep. Make sure that the wolves keep away from the sheep. But what do you guys do? What do you guys do? You guys are asleep on the job. That's what you people do. You guys are letting the wolves at the sheep, and the sheep are the public assets of Saskatchewan. You people deserve to be fired because you're letting the wolves at the sheep, and the people of Saskatchewan don't want to put up with it any more.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — It's not yours to tamper with, folks. You had nothing to do with building it. You had nothing to do with it whatsoever, and it's not yours to sell; it's not yours to destroy; it's not yours to wreck. It belongs to the people of Saskatchewan, and as soon as you get that through your thick skulls, the better off we'll all be.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — You had no mandate to sell \$40 million worth of government highway equipment. You had no mandate to fire 400 government workers. You had no mandate to sell off the dental equipment and fire 400 dental therapists. You had no mandate to sell off SED Systems in Saskatoon and 70 people are fired. You had no mandate sell Saskoil and 25 per cent of the work-force became unemployed. You have no mandate, none whatsoever. You don't own a thing — remember that. You own nothing; the people of Saskatchewan do. You people aren't builders; you're destroyers, you're the wrecking crew.

Now what are you doing? You're firing people all over Saskatchewan and people are leaving this province in droves. Sixty-three hundred people left Saskatchewan this past month, and it was a short month — 6,300 people. Now I remember in 1982 you people said, bring the kids home, and the kids were all going to flood home. Well the kids are leaving this province in droves because you offer them no hope and no future.

And I want to talk about some of the privatizations that you folks have been involved in, and it's not a very pretty sight, not a pretty sight at all. What have they done for Saskatchewan Power Corporation, natural gas division? Let's talk about SaskPower Corporation. This is the government that said they weren't going to privatize our Crown utilities. No, they weren't going to do that, but what have they done?

Now since this government came to office in 1982, they've more than doubled the long-term debt of Saskatchewan Power Corporation and they now claim it's a problem. They doubled the debt, they now claim it's a problem and they've got to sell everything off. It's kind of like the Devine deficit they created with their string of deficit budgets. Their mismanagement creates the problem, then they announce that they have a problem — they realize they have a problem — and now they propose to further complicate that problem by going further in debt with the \$1 billion boondoggle at Rafferty-Alameda.

Now every year in the last 10 years the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's gas operations have made a profit, and that's enabled the Saskatchewan Power Corporation to moderate the effective losses on the electrical side which has suffered losses in five of the last six years under the PC government.

In other words, the integrated effect of the gas and the electricity side of SPC have been beneficial for Saskatchewan consumers. But what did these guys do last year? In April of 1988 this government suddenly announces that it has privatized the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's natural gas reserves. They've sold 510

billion cubic feet of gas to Saskoil, which was once a Crown corporation. Now that's a huge amount of natural gas. That's almost six times its total annual sales volume of gas. They have privatized an amount of natural gas equivalent to 15 years consumption by 232,000 residential consumers in Saskatchewan. That's what these guys have done.

Now the sale made Saskoil a private company. Seventy-five per cent of the shares owned by people in Saskoil are owned by people outside of the province — 75 per cent. Now these are the guys that say that they want to keep economic control in our province, but 75 per cent of the shares in Saskoil are owned by people outside of Saskatchewan.

Now this government says that they don't want to privatize our utilities. They privatized the natural gas reserves — 510 billion cubic feet of natural gas — they privatized that. They privatized the drag-line. They privatized the Poplar River Coal Mine. And these guys say they don't want to privatize the utilities, but no one believes them.

Last year you people split up the natural gas division of SPC into what's now called SaskEnergy. And at that time the Deputy Premier of our province, who . . . You know you'd like to think that the Deputy Premier will be honest with you in this legislature, that he will tell you the truth. You'd like to think that the Deputy Premier has some integrity, that he isn't afraid to say, I made a mistake. Or he's not afraid to say, that's the truth.

The Deputy Premier in our province said that the Saskatchewan energy, the natural gas side of SaskPower, wasn't about to be sold, that the natural gas side was a utility. It would never be sold, in fact, he said. That's what the Deputy Premier said.

And what do we learn in January? We learn that the PC members opposite are about to sell off the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. That's what we find out from these honourable members opposite who never tell an untruth. They never misspeak any kind of words. They're always honest.

An Hon. Member: — No fibs.

(2130)

Ms. Atkinson: — No fibs. They don't lie. These people said that they were going to sell off Saskatchewan Energy. Now I somehow find this unbelievable. Here's a government that said in 1986, we're not going to sell the Crown corporations that provide utilities to our province; we'll never do that. The Minister of Finance said that, the Premier said that, the Deputy-Premier said that, and now they're selling off the natural gas side of Saskatchewan Power Corporation. And it's the profitable side of the corporation.

And what are the rest of us going to be left with? Well we're going to be left with a user-pay kind of philosophy. We're going to have a private monopoly socking it to us on the natural gas side, and we're going to have a public monopoly socking it to us on the electrical side, because

they're not going to have those revenues, the profitable parts of SaskPower, to offset the electrical rates. That's what these people do. You can't trust them, not at all.

Let's talk about Sask Minerals. Sask Minerals was a good little company set up in the late 1940s. It was a sodium sulphate plant at Chaplin and Fox Valley, and they had a peat moss operation in Carrot River. And this was part of the New Democrats' diversification.

We thought it was important that there was business in rural Saskatchewan, that people in rural Saskatchewan would have access to jobs. So who in the world would have ever dreamed that there would be a peat moss plant up in Carrot River, and we'd have a sodium sulphate plant down in Fox Valley and Chaplin? Not many people could imagine that. But we were able to do that by using the public's money, the taxpayers' money to ensure that there were jobs in those centres.

Now these little companies made a great deal of money for the people of Saskatchewan. They made a great deal of money. The government sells off the sodium sulphate plant for \$12.5 million. They sell off the Carrot River operation for \$3.4 million. So the sale was about \$15.9 million. That is less than Saskatchewan Minerals profits in the last years prior to privatization. That's less than what that little company got in terms of profits. Taxpayers' money wasn't being used in that little operation. It was able to sustain itself. It had profits, it provided jobs, it provided grants in lieu of taxes to those communities. It was good for business in the area; it has a bit of a tax base to ensure that not all of the infrastructure in those rural communities were paid for by the individuals that lived there.

There was public ownership in that community. And what did they get? You know what did we get? This government got \$12.9 million, which amounts to about 10 days interest on the public debt. Nothing. Nothing. And now we hear, now we hear that Dickenson Mines of Ontario — I mean these guys didn't sell it to the workers, they didn't sell it to anybody inside Saskatchewan, they sold it to people down east in Ontario and Quebec. That's what these people did. And now what do we hear? We hear that Dickenson Mines of Ontario is about to sell it. To whom we don't know — don't know who. We don't know for how much. We don't know if the workers will have their jobs. We don't know anything. No guarantees in this privatization. No guarantees that these privatized operations will continue to exist in Saskatchewan. But there are guarantees when the public owns it, there are guarantees, because the public will ensure that those operations continue to exist.

And then we have Premier Cdn Enterprises up at Carrot River. You know, here's a Quebec company that said that they were going to come in and build a new plant. Well it's now a year past the privatization, we still don't have a new plant at Carrot River, we don't know whether the new plant will come about. We hear that in order for that new plant to come about, the government has to build 24 kilometers of pavement in order for this new plant to be built. We hear that the rural municipality has to forgive about \$50,000 in taxes that they used to collect from Sask Minerals in order for this plant to be built. So who are the

winners in this little operation?

The people in Carrot River don't have a new plant. The people of the province may have to build 24 kilometers of new highway, similar to the Weyerhaeuser deal — don't get any money, but we have to build 35 kilometers of road every year — and the rural municipalities may have to give up that \$50,000 a year tax base that they had and transfer those taxes on to the local people.

Now this is an example of PC privatization. There was no public tendering — not anything — no public tendering whatsoever; there was no advanced consultation with the communities affected, and the assets were sold in a sweetheart deal to two out-of-province corporations — hardly what I call a good deal.

I want to talk about the PC privatization of SED Systems in Saskatoon. Now SED Systems was originally established as a private company by the University of Saskatchewan in 1972. It emerged from the university's high-tech research and development work, and it grew out of the space engineering division of the university's Institute of Space and Atmospheric Studies. And in 1987 SED was owned by the university, by the province, by the government, and by some of SED's employees. And there were also some private shareholders. And this company employed about 350 people in the city of Saskatoon, the city I represent.

Now in January of 1987 the Government of Saskatchewan, the Conservative government, allowed SED Systems to be taken over by an Ontario company called Fleet Aerospace. Now the PC minister of Economic Development, the member from Kindersley at the time, defended the deal.

An Hon. Member: — What did he say?

Ms. Atkinson: — He claimed that it was going to preserve the 350 jobs in Saskatoon, and it would keep the management of the company in Saskatchewan, in Saskatoon. The province sold about \$2 million shares in SED Systems to Fleet in exchange for Fleet shares worth about \$1.3 million at the time. That was \$11.75 per share in January 1987.

Now what happens in early January 1988? The deal has totally failed. Fleet has forced SED Systems to lay off 70 workers, it's threatened to fire more staff or even pull SED out of Saskatchewan unless the provincial government gives in to the demands of Fleet Aerospace.

An Hon. Member: — Blackmail.

Ms. Atkinson: — Blackmail, Mr. Speaker, that's what happens. Blackmail from an Ontario-based company, blackmail. Not fair. Now in late 1988 or late February 1988, Fleet's chairman in Ontario tells us . . . He threatens us bluntly and publicly. The message to the government is, we better get some financial help and some help quick. I'm quoting the chairman. If we don't have help, we'll cut it right back again, and again, and we may even have to move. That's what the chairman says, George Dragone, February 24, 1988, *Star-Phoenix* interview.

Now in March of 1988, what does SED do? They're forced to do this by this Ontario company. They have to lay off more workers, and they replace SED's Saskatchewan managers, people born and raised in Saskatchewan, with an officer of Fleet Aerospace from Ontario.

Now in late March the PC government gave in to Fleet's latest demands for financial help; the PC government agreed that Sedco would purchase SED's new building for \$10 million in order to give SED and Fleet some operating cash. And Sedco leased back the building . . . would lease the building to SED Systems for about 20 years. And the terms of the lease have never been disclosed to this date.

Now from the onset I'd say that the PC managers opposite have mismanaged this situation badly. They've mismanaged the privatization of SED Systems in Saskatchewan. This used to be a proud and successful Saskatchewan high-tech company. This company is the company that has allowed Saskatchewan to go ahead with high technology in our province. This is the company that has developed the expertise in our province.

Many of the people who now have high-tech companies originally come out of SED Systems. That's where they come from. This used to be a proud and successful high-tech Saskatchewan company. It was developed by Saskatchewan people to give Saskatchewan a chance to participate in high-tech opportunities, but this PC privatization has produced the following results: 70 workers fired, not to work again in Saskatoon.

The province's \$2 million investment in Fleet, if it were sold today on the Toronto Stock Exchange, is only worth \$600,000. You people really are good business men and women — good business men and women — \$2 million worth of Fleet. We have about \$3 million worth of a share in SED Systems. You buy it or you exchange it for \$2 million of shares, and those shares are only worth \$600,000. Great mathematicians over there. Great business people. So these mismanagers, these people that couldn't run a popcorn stand — and no disrespect to all the popcorn stand owners in Saskatchewan.

The ownership and control of this Saskatchewan company has now been given over to an Ontario company that uses public threats to get more money from Saskatchewan people, to get more financial assistance from Saskatchewan people. And the minister, the member from Kindersley, what does he say? He says that this is a good deal for Saskatchewan; this is going to keep this company in Saskatchewan; it's going to keep Saskatchewan workers in Saskatchewan. And we all know that this is the minister who was responsible for the Pioneer fiasco in 1985. Some minister.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Now I want to talk about the highway privatization. In April of 1983, the PC Highways minister Jim Garner — who my colleague earlier referred to tonight, he was the minister that lied to the House and had the good graciousness to resign his seat because he lied

— he fired 157 Saskatchewan highway workers because he was privatizing the road-building function of our province.

And he said — and I remember these words with a lot of interest because I know a lot of those highways people that were laid off — these lay-offs are a move from socialism to freedom for the employees who will now have the opportunity to work for the private sector. That's what the minister said.

And then this minister, this same minister, began some further privatization of the highways, and that led to a further firing of some 237 workers. And he said again, it's freedom of choice. I'm giving them the opportunity to transfer to the private sector. So we've got over 400 highway workers that have lost their jobs.

I want to talk about the state of our highways. Has anybody been driving on the highways lately in Saskatchewan? Well, Mr. Minister of Highways, I think it's time you took a little trip. I know you guys like to fly in the airplanes. I noticed the other day that my colleagues, when we went up to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation convention, we rented a van and drove the Saskatchewan highways. I noticed that the Minister of Consumer Affairs, and the Minister of Education, the Minister of Health, they took an airplane. And maybe if the cabinet minister got off the government aircraft and got into some cars and drove down the highways, you would understand that the privatization of 400 highways workers has led to a serious deterioration of the highways in our province, and it's time that you people put your feet on the ground and got down with the little people and . . . (inaudible) . . . what was going on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — These high flyers. It's time they got down to earth. Because the privatization of the highways equipment, the privatization of those jobs has meant over 400 people have lost their jobs in Saskatchewan at a time when we can't afford to have any jobs lost. Four hundred pieces of highways equipment worth about \$40 million was only sold for 6 million — 6 million — and many of the people who purchased that equipment were from outside of Saskatchewan.

So privatization of highways has meant lost jobs, lost assets to people in the United States and Alberta and who knows where, and a significant deterioration of our highways in Saskatchewan. That's what privatization has meant for our highways.

And I want to turn for a moment to Saskoil, and I referred to it earlier when I talked about the privatization of SPC. Now the PC government privatized Saskoil in 1986, and from the time the PC government took office in 1982, Saskoil made a profit every year until its first year as a privatized corporation. In 1982 public ownership of Saskoil meant \$1.5 million in profits. In 1983 there was \$30.9 million in profits. In 1984 there was \$44 million in profits. In 1985, \$40.6 million in profits; and when it was privatized, there was a \$1.3 million loss in 1986; and in 1987 they had a profit of 22.6 million.

(2145)

Now in the privatization process, preferred shares were sold to private investors and those preferred shareholders have received dividends, even in 1986 when the corporation lost 1.3 million. The only shares that the Government of Saskatchewan has on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan — because, as I said, governments own nothing; the people do — the government shares or the people's shares are common shares, and those shares don't pay a cent in dividends. Even in 1987 when this company, this privatized company, made \$22.6 million, the people of this province didn't receive one single share from that privatized Saskoil.

Now in 1984, before privatization, Saskoil made a profit of \$44 million, and all of that money was kept in Saskatchewan on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. In 1986 when that company lost \$1.3 million, it paid nothing to the people of Saskatchewan, but it did pay dividends of some \$5 million to the private shareholders of preferred shares.

Now, within six months of Saskoil, which was a publicly owned company, within six months of it being privatized, 25 per cent of the labour force was laid off — 25 per cent were laid off by these privatizers. And within one year of privatization . . . Now here's the government that wants to keep, they say they want to keep ownership and control in Saskatchewan, but that's not what actually happens. We've seen ownership and control leave Saskatchewan on SED Systems, on Sask Minerals, and we've seen the ownership and control leave Saskatchewan on Saskoil, because over 75 per cent of the shares held by people are held by people outside of Saskatchewan — they're not held by Saskatchewan citizens. And every time the Saskoil pays a dividend, 75 per cent of those dividends go to other provinces. That's where they go. They don't stay here for us to tax the individual shareholders — Saskatchewan shareholders. That money doesn't stay in Saskatchewan. Yet when it was publicly owned, that money stayed here. It was put to work here on behalf of Saskatchewan people.

Now people wonder why our highways are deteriorating, why our school systems are deteriorating, why our health care system is deteriorating. It's because these people don't know how to collect revenues. They're selling things off. They're selling off the assets that used to provide revenues to pay for important public programs. That's why. That's why.

And you know, I looked at the Saskoil annual report in 1987. Saskoil only paid about \$10 million in corporate taxes, and that's not all money that stayed in Saskatchewan; that's corporate taxes to Ottawa. And we don't know how much money Saskatchewan receives, probably not much. Now that . . . In 1985 Saskoil made \$40.6 million. That money stayed here. It's now privatized — it's owned by people outside of Saskatchewan. When there's profits made, they go to people outside of Saskatchewan. When income taxes are paid, they go to the federal government. And one of the reasons why we had public ownership was to ensure that resource rent stayed in our province for our people, on behalf of our people, and these people are giving it away.

I want to talk about the privatization of Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation. Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation was formed in 1974 as a hard-rock mining company. And the purpose of SMDC, as it's called, was to develop hard-rock mining in northern Saskatchewan on behalf of all of Saskatchewan's citizens. It became a fully integrated mining company, actively involved in exploration development in mining in northern Saskatchewan. And over the past five years Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation has made a total profit of \$126 million for the people of Saskatchewan. And its profits in 1987 alone — we haven't seen the 1988 annual report — amounted to \$60.3 million. That's what that publicly owned company made on behalf of Saskatchewan people. But that represents a 19 per cent return on investment. And I know that most people over there don't understand this, but a 19 per cent return on investment is a mighty nice profit, mighty nice for a publicly owned company.

Now in late February, 1988, the government — the Mulroney and the Devine governments — decided that they were going to have a merger. They were going to amalgamate Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation and Eldorado Nuclear, which is a federally owned Crown corporation and they were going to create a new big uranium and hard-rock mining company.

Now Eldorado Nuclear is a very weak company. It's not in very good shape financially. Its retained earnings deficit in the last few years has been about \$144 million, and it has a long-term debt of some \$420 million. Now the PC privatization phase for this privatization of these two companies is supposed to occur in two stages. Bill 56 was introduced in our legislature last June and it was the legislation to sell Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation and merge it with Eldorado to form a new company which is now owned by the Government of Saskatchewan — or the people of Saskatchewan, because I said governments own nothing. The people of Saskatchewan own about 61.5 per cent, and the Government of Canada owns about 38.5 per cent of this company. Now the privatization of this company is to take about seven years, and the first share offering is expected some time in early spring.

Now in our view, that's a pretty dangerous timetable for selling off the shares of this company. You will know that this is not a particularly good commercial deal. And it's not good because the price of uranium in particular is down at the moment. Market conditions wouldn't dictate that you'd want to have a share offer at this time because the market's down.

Now the two governments, the federal government and the provincial government, have agreed to sell off about 30 per cent of their shares in two years, 60 per cent in four years, and 100 per cent of all shares will be sold in the next seven-year period.

Now there's absolutely no guarantee that this corporation will not be sold at fire-sale prices, and that the Saskatchewan government will recover both the long-term debt of the Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation, which it has underwritten to

make the share issue possible, as well as something for the accumulative investment of the people of this province in the government equity in SMDC.

Now once again, the PC members opposite have privatized the privatization process. They refuse to release any details of the documents. All of these deals have been done in secret. They're secret deals with the federal government.

Now, I might add that we now have the spectre, the possibility of the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. There's one thing I've come to learn about these guys opposite. These guys like doing deals. They don't know how to manage Saskatchewan, but they like to do deals. They like to go out to The Diplomat, or is it the Ramada Renaissance, and have a nice dinner with fancy tablecloths and fancy china and dinner ware, and they like to do deals with their buddies, they really like it.

They like flying in government airplanes, they like the champagne, they like the wine, they like the good food, they really enjoy that. They like putting together deals. But I want to remind the people opposite that while you're putting together the deals, you have no mandate to put together the deals. You have no mandate whatsoever. You have no mandate to be eating out at The Diplomat or the Hotel Saskatchewan or the Ramada Renaissance, I think it's called — I've not been there too often — you have no mandate to be there. No mandate whatsoever.

You're sitting at those tables with those fancy tablecloths and those fancy knives and forks and those fancy china dishes. You're sitting there with your big business friends and you've got no mandate to be there. And you're sitting there on the taxpayers' money, and don't ever forget that — don't forget it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Now I would hope that when we come to government in 1990 that we'll have some respect for the taxpayers, that we'll have some respect. That maybe we'll be eating hamburgers some place instead of shrimp and filet mignon and bouillabaisse and all this kind of crap. I hope that we are going to take the taxpayers' money that they give us to use on their behalf, and treat it with some respect, treat it with some respect. Because lots of people see you big shots eating out and dining out and cooking your deals. They see you do that and they don't like it, they don't like it. They don't think you have any integrity, none whatsoever.

Now I know, when you guys came to power, I think you had lots of good ideas. I think you really thought you were going to turn our province right side up. But what have you done? You've turned it inside out, upside down, sideways, forwards, backwards. You've wrecked it. You've wrecked it. You've wrecked it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — The people . . . As I said earlier, the people of Saskatchewan think that you're destroying us. They think you're destroying us. They see what you're doing to our beautiful, wonderful province. You know if

you people had any kind of courage, any kind of commitment to the people of Saskatchewan, you'd say, look it, we don't know how to manage. We don't know what we're doing, we give up and call an election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — People of Saskatchewan, I hear it all the time; they hear about little deals that you cook up with your friends; they hear it all the time. They hear about your little deals with your friends; they build a building, the people of Saskatchewan rent it for big rent. They know what you've done to the Ramada Renaissance. They know that basically the Ramada Renaissance in Regina was built on taxpayers' money, that you've entered into a long-term lease with the Ramada Renaissance, that you put public departments into that building.

And the member . . . the member from Saltcoats shakes his head. Well you know, Mr. Member from Saltcoats, I was out in your constituency, and there's lots of scams that you're engaged in out there too, and the people out there know it, the people know it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — And the member claps. The member claps because he's proud of himself. He's proud of the fact that he and his buddies and his cronies are ripping us off.

Well the people of Saskatchewan will not forgive you. They will not forgive you, Mr. Member from Saltcoats, and they will never forget you. And I think it's time that you people know that when we come to government, we are going to be looking in every nook and cranny in this province for the patronage and the corruption and the graft and the rip-off and the sleaze, because the people of this province know that you are the corrupters, you're the sleaze, you're the rip-off artists. We'll be looking, and we will make sure that you people are never, never, never elected again because we are going to expose you for what you have done. We will expose you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — And all of you will be held accountable, every single, solitary one of you. The member from Kindersley, and the kind of stuff that is going on in his riding. The member from Rosetown, and the stuff that is going on in his riding. And Melville, and Morse, and Melfort, and Saltcoats, and Redberry, and Moosomin, and Regina South, and Shellbrook-Torch River. We know what you people are up to; we know what you people are up to. And you laugh. Don't laugh, because it's going to come out; it's going to come out. Don't laugh. All of you better run for cover. You better run for cover because you will be exposed for what you are. You have no right to rip off the people of our province, no right whatsoever, and we will expose you; we will expose you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to present my views on this throne speech. The people of Saskatchewan know what this government is up to. They

know that this government are acting in many respects like a bunch of bureaucrats, that they don't care about the people of our province.

And we have some screaming maniac at the back of the hall . . .

An Hon. Member: — From Qu'Appelle-Lumsden.

Ms. Atkinson: — Qu'Appelle-Lumsden. And you know what, Mr. Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, Minister of Finance, yes, you get up, you get up and exit, because you'll be scrutinized by the people of our province. You'll be scrutinized.

The people of Saskatchewan know what this budget's all about. They know that this government has delivered the people's assets to their corporate friends and their political cronies. They know that this government's about patronage, that this government's about rewarding a few people. They know that this government believes in the trickle-down theory: you feed your friends and maybe the rest of us will get a few crumbs. But a new day is dawning. A new day is dawning, members opposite. There will be a new Jerusalem in this province. We will have a new premier of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — We will have members of the legislature with integrity . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. It being 10 o'clock the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 10 p.m.