

April 10, 1989

April 10/89

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ORAL QUESTIONS

Federal Sales Tax

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Finance, and it has to do with Friday's meeting in Ottawa with his federal counterpart and provincial counterparts pertaining to, as I understand it, a number of fiscal problems facing the country, including the possibility of a national sales tax which Mr. Wilson wishes to impose upon the people of Saskatchewan, and as I understand it, you and your government are prepared to co-operate.

My question to the Minister of Finance is: did that meeting produce a mechanism as to how this tax will be applied; namely, will it be collected separately, the 7 per cent provincial and the 9 per cent federal, or is it going to be rolled into one, 16, 17, 18 per cent? What is the mechanism with respect to the national sales tax, and why is it, sir, that you did you not oppose this tax?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — One, at no time has the Government of Saskatchewan indicated to anyone that it was prepared to participate or co-operate in the national sales tax. What we have made clear, and the position has not changed, Mr. Speaker, is that we want to see the proposals for the national sales tax. We have not seen the proposals. We certainly have the general concept of the national sales tax, and the position is exactly the same as the one we communicated to both this House and to the people of the province a year ago when the matter first came about.

Secondly, with regard to the specific question that the Leader of the Opposition asked, no, no detailed proposals were put forward by the federal government. And it was, again, discussions of general policy questions, but no consensus was reached, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, the question which I asked, I thought was straightforward, and I must say I'm a little bit puzzled by your answer, because here you have 11 Finance ministers from all across Canada, presumably to discuss the question of the next taxation regime for Canada as it impacts on our province, in fact all provinces.

Are you telling this House that two weeks before the announced budget date, April 27 or thereabouts, that you, sir, as Minister of Finance, and the Premier of this province of Saskatchewan do not know the details of what Mr. Wilson and Mr. Mulroney have in mind when the press widely reports that they contemplate a 9 per cent national sales tax to be integrated and added on top of our own 7 per cent sales tax? Surely that's not the position. What in fact was put forward on the table in this regard, and what specifically was Saskatchewan's

response?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Saskatchewan's response has been, was, and as it has been consistently, until such time as we see proposals, we are prepared to consider the operation of the national sales tax, but we are not taking any such position until we see the detailed proposals of the federal government. No rates were discussed.

Let me suggest to the hon. member that the interpretation that he puts on the combination of rates may or may not happen. We don't know exactly what the proposal is going to be with the federal government. We don't whether it's going to be a lower rate, whether it's going to be . . .

An Hon. Member: — A higher rate?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — No, we have no indication as to what the rate is going to be. And secondly, Mr. Speaker, no provinces were committed to participating in a national sales tax, and the option very clearly is still there for the province of Saskatchewan, and will continue to be there, not to participate in a national sales tax.

An Hon. Member: — Read the paper.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question, again to the Minister of Finance.

I note, parenthetically, that the Minister of Trade says that we should read the paper, and I guess we should, judging by the answers, because we get as much from **The Globe and Mail** as we do from the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Minister, my question to you is very simple. We may not know the details of this, but we certainly do know that there is a proposal for a national sales tax, the net effect of which has got to be a higher taxation level on the people of the province of Saskatchewan, and the net effect of which has to be that questions as to what is exempt and what is not exempt are going to play an important part for farmers and consumers in the province of Saskatchewan.

Surely, do you not have enough details now to be able to take a position in principle with respect to this scheme, a position of principle which, I would submit with respect, should be a principle of opposition to increasing the taxes from our 7 per cent to, say, 16 or even higher.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — With all respect to the Leader of the Opposition, the national sales tax can be imposed in ways which mean a reduction for farmers, a reduction for our resource industries and, in fact, a reduction for many people in the province. And that's precisely the type of information that we want to get before we can make that decision, Mr. Speaker.

The details have not been given by the federal government; rates have not been given by the federal government. Whether we can expect the rates to be given

in the federal budget, that is not something that the federal Minister of Finance was prepared to tell the provinces. Certainly the federal government has made it clear that it is actively considering and, I suspect, very likely to go with a national sales tax. I don't know for sure whether that is the final position of the federal government. If I knew that, I would be quite prepared to let the Leader of the Opposition know.

Secondly, we cannot take a position, and I think quite properly so, until we have from the federal government questions like rates, the broadness of the base of the tax, what the exemptions to the tax are going to be, what are going to be the expenditure offsets; in other words, what expenditures are the federal government prepared to pay to offset the tax on, particularly, lower income levels. Until we have that type of information, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be both unwise and certainly improper for a government of a province to take a position on it.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have one final question to the Minister of Finance. And I might just say as a brief preface that I find it incredible that the Minister of Finance of Canada, according to our Minister of Finance provincially, two weeks before the budget is to be announced, apparently neither has the details of the scheme nor the proposals of the scheme firmly fixed in mind; or if he does, he's not prepared to tell you or the provinces as to what he does have as an approach. I find that just incredible, given the fact that we've got two weeks to go with respect to the budget announcement.

I'll ask one question specifically: what is going to be exempted from this proposed national sales tax? What is your government's position? Do you support the Consumer's Association of Canada, which says that nothing should be exempt, or are there to be exemptions? And what is the Saskatchewan government position in that regard?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I hope that the Leader of the Opposition understands that the tax, according to even *The Globe and Mail*, would not take effect before 1991, so I would expect that the national government would have some time to announce its rates and its expenditure options and its exemption package well before that time.

Did they give it at the meeting? I've already said, I believe on three occasions today, no, they did not. And until such time as we have that information, let me indicate to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition that it was this government, I believe the first, or certainly one of the very first, that indicated that food should be exempt from that tax. I think that that was a position well stated, Mr. Speaker. But until we have the other positions, it would be, as I have said before, unwise and in my view improper to even take a position.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Transfer Payments to Provinces

Mr. Shillington: — My question to the minister is, what you had for lunch, what you had to drink, and what you

did after hours, Mr. Minister? You don't seem . . . that seems to be all you did. I know that Ottawa is a pleasant place to spend a couple of days in April, but I don't think the public will accept the fact that you went there, spent two days in Ottawa, and know nothing more now than you did when you went.

Mr. Minister, surely you must have discussed some of the realities which all Canadians recognize. One of those realities is that there is going to be less money in the established program funding in future years than there was in the past. Will the minister now admit that you've overestimated the amount of revenue you're likely to get from the federal government in the current year, and will you also admit that in future years it's going to have a much more serious effect than it will even this year?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — It's nice to see the opposition Finance critic finally participate in the budget debate, Mr. Speaker, that he ignored for a week.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — The fact is, as I have said before and I say again today, that we received no indication of what's in the federal budget, but I frankly didn't expect to.

Secondly, that we have no indication that there's going to be any reduction in transfer payments. We have said on numerous occasions, and I've restated it throughout the budget debate, that we have no indication of a reduction in transfer payments.

Thirdly, as it applies to established program funding, let me indicate to the hon. opposition Finance critic that it was this government that got the change in the national government's position when the EPF (established programs financing) was changed a couple of years back to at least have in there not less than the rate of inflation. And it was this government that put this in, Mr. Speaker; it was this government that caused that to happen.

Should that be the case, Mr. Speaker, based on the inflation rate as it applies nationally and in central Canada, if we were to take that position, there may even be an increase in EPF.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, the hon. Michael Wilson has said there's . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Does the hon. member have a new question or a supplementary?

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, the Hon. Michael Wilson has warned that there's likely to be a reduction in the transfer of funds to the provincial government. Your own deputy minister has said that in Saskatoon. I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you'd stop pretending that it isn't so.

My question, Mr. Minister, is whether or not you took steps to protest this reduction in funding to the province of Saskatchewan; and if you did, is anyone listening?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well, Mr. Speaker, these were the same questions of a couple of weeks ago, and I made it clear at that time that the province of Saskatchewan has taken the position that, one, obviously there shouldn't be a reduction or a cut in transfer payments; that it is an unwise national policy to force the federal debt onto the backs of the provinces. It is, one, unfair; and secondly, the provinces do not have the fiscal capacity to manage the national debt. So it's a false economy, in our view. And that is the position that we put forward to the federal Minister of Finance, and I communicated that to this House a couple of weeks ago when the question was first raised.

So to suggest otherwise, I think, is political posturing and unfair criticism, Mr. Speaker. We've stated our position. We're obviously . . . I'm prepared to repeat it many times today. These are questions that, as I say, came up a couple of weeks ago, and the same answer applies.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the same minister, and it's clear that this minister went down to Ottawa and came back empty-handed. How incompetent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Now, Mr. Minister, did you speak to Mr. Wilson about any cuts to our province in educational spending; and did you inform the federal Minister of Finance that our government would oppose vigorously any cuts to educational financing on the part of the federal government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well I hate to have to tell the hon. member who is fairly new to the House, and perhaps when we went through the debate over the last couple of years, that the policy has been consistent by the province of Saskatchewan for some years, including under the previous administration, that education and health are not separated out under the established program financing.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's a policy that was supported by the previous administration, and certainly one that we support. So they are not segmented and they haven't been segmented and I don't think that Saskatchewan needs to have them segmented, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Finance. As the minister knows, there's a special relationship when it comes to funding for social services between the provinces and the federal government, and that is that the federal government pays for 50 per cent of all social services' cost. Now, Mr. Minister, we've seen from your government, since the provincial election, consistent cuts in social services: four-year freeze in the family income plan; 16 per cent cut in this budget to family support organizations.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is: in the course of your discussions with the federal Minister of Finance, did you discuss prospective federal cuts in transfer payments for social services, and if so, did you indicate squarely that you would oppose such cuts? Or, Mr. Minister, are we to expect that, in addition to your provincial cuts to the poor and to those dependent on Social Services in this province, we're going to see more federal cuts after the federal budget comes down to compound the injury that you've done to poor people in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well I always appreciate the question from the hon. member who has so well articulated the NDP policy of bringing back the provincial gas tax with no rebates, and I like to remind him of that, Mr. Speaker, because that would require all individuals in the province.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, let me advise the hon. member . . . and we went through this debate in the budget debate. I know the hon. members don't like to admit that they lost the budget debate and lost it heavily — both, Mr. Speaker, in the House and in the public, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — And I gather the second weekend back at home has brought that message to them.

Having said that, having said that, Mr. Speaker, there was not the reduction that the hon. member refers to; in fact, there was an increase and he is well aware of that. The increase in payments to families was significant in this budget, Mr. Speaker, and one that we are very, very proud of, that you opposed. So I suggest that the hon. member . . . his facts are wrong. His information . . . his interpretation of the facts are also wrong. And finally, Mr. Speaker, I've reiterated now for the third time today, the third time this session, that we have indicated our position opposing any effort by the federal government to move the debt back on to the backs of the provinces.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Privatization and the School Curriculum

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Minister, at your PC Party policy meeting in Swift Current this weekend, your colleague, the minister of privatization, advanced the idea of having privatization taught as part of our school curriculum. Have you informed him that our class-rooms are for learning and not for political propaganda and that your department would absolutely refuse to consider such a notion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — First of all, Mr. Speaker, I don't accept at face value what the hon. member is suggesting the minister of privatization said. But less there be any misunderstanding, Mr. Speaker, quite simply, there will

not be any course on public participation or privatization developed for use in our schools period, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Atkinson: — So, Mr. Minister, just to be clear, you are taking the position that PC right-wing, political propaganda such as privatization has absolutely no place in our Saskatchewan class-rooms, and you will be telling the minister of privatization that he should no longer advance the notion that privatization has any place whatsoever in our class-rooms in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well first of all, Mr. Speaker, privatization is not some kind of right-wing ideological agenda. And I see I've hit a nerve, Mr. Speaker. The reality is, across the world, communist countries, Australia, Europe, New Zealand, England, France — in countries all over the world of all political stripes, Mr. Speaker, are undertaking a course of greater and greater privatization.

Now the NDP have ideological tunnel vision. And everything for them is an ideological in basis. That is not the case. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct that misstatement first, Mr. Speaker.

As it relates to a discussion of various economic models in our schools, whether it be . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order order.

Ms. Atkinson: — New question to the Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, can you confirm that you had a discussion with Bill Hunter on entrepreneurship? And can you confirm that Bill Hunter presented you with a course outline on entrepreneurship, and can you confirm that Bill Hunter has commissioned a curriculum designer to design a course on entrepreneurship in this province? Can you confirm that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, yes, I have met with Bill Hunter. Yes, he has some ideas on entrepreneurship and education, Mr. Speaker. But I can tell you as well that Bill Hunter, nor does any one other person develop curriculum models that will go into the schools across this province.

Having said all that, Mr. Speaker, is it somehow wrong that our young people should learn about entrepreneurship any more than that they would learn about co-ops, Mr. Speaker, or private enterprise or Crown corporations? The reality is, Mr. Speaker, all those things today are available to our children in our schools through social studies courses, through economics courses, Mr. Speaker, and through the highly successful Junior Achievers model.

Now I know the word "entrepreneurship" is like a four-letter word to the NDP. It's the e-word, and I know they have difficulty with that. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, parents . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order, order. Order. I believe the hon. member is entering debate and answers become protracted that way.

Ms. Atkinson: — Supplementary question. So we understand that you, in fact, did have a meeting with your department officials with Bill Hunter; that he did present a course to you on entrepreneurship. Mr. Minister, would you be prepared to table this proposed course outline to the legislature so we can see what kind of curriculum developer that Mr. Hunter really is?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I would table it if in fact it was going to become a course but it is not, so I . . . there's nothing to table, Mr. Speaker.

School-based Dental Program

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the same minister, and I want to ask the minister, or at least inform him that the school children in this province already know a great deal about privatization, Tory style.

Mr. Minister, you've privatized the dental program out of the school, dismissed 400 workers in the process. What I want to know, Mr. Minister: can you tell me whether or not you have consulted with the school children on that basis, and the parents of these children, whether or not they would rather have back the school-based dental program or your idea of propaganda, PC-style privatization courses?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well your question may be more properly answered by the Minister of Health because, as I understand it, in terms of dental health for our children, the enrolment rate and the participation rate is much higher under the new system than it was under the old system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — And I myself, Mr. Speaker, in my own constituency, took part in the opening up of a dental clinic in Stoughton, Saskatchewan, where they haven't had one for 33 years, Mr. Speaker, and it's because we have a new way of delivering dental health to the province, Mr. Speaker, and we stand by it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Final supplementary to the minister. I want to ask you again whether or not you've taken the opportunity to check with the parent-teachers' associations around the province on this very issue; whether or not the public would rather have back the school-based dental program or your convoluted concept of Bill Hunter's argument for privatization forced down the throats of the school children of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all,

unless I have some correspondence in my office I'm not aware of, I can't recall that I've had any correspondence in a long time, if ever, relative to the old dental plan. Point number one, Mr. Speaker.

Secondly, our schools have not, nor will they ever be, agents for dogma. Now, I know there are some in the NDP in past years, Mr. Speaker, that might like to have had it that way. But under a Progressive Conservative government such will not be the case, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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

Mr. Mitchell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to enter this debate of today because the question of privatization and the government's plans with respect to privatization — probably one of the most important issues that this House will have to face in this session, or indeed in any session.

It strikes a chord in me, Mr. Speaker, because of the background of my family in this province and the experience that they had over the years. My father's parents, my great grandparents, came to this province in 1875. My great-grandfather was one of the first Europeans into the part of the country that is now represented by the member from Canora, and my family has lived in that area since that time. They have been active, without exception, from the days of my great-grandfather in farm organizations and in community organizations, and it is in the context of that life experience in my family that I grew up and acquired the values and the beliefs that I have.

And I want to just state them, not that they're news to the House, but that I think that it's important that these matters be mentioned by people with the kind of experience that I have had, as well as others in this House.

I recall, for example, the stories that my father tells about the establishment of the grain growers' co-operatives, culminating in the establishment of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and his stories about why that was necessary, what the problems were that they were attempting to overcome. And he told me the stories, Mr. Speaker, that are so well known to all of us, about the difficulties that the farmers had in getting their grain to market, the difficulties that they had dealing with the elevator companies of the day, the difficulties that they had dealing with the railway companies, and how this led to the establishment of the territorial grain growers' association and the united grain growers' association and, ultimately, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

That's important, Mr. Speaker, because it is a classic example and a very vivid example in Saskatchewan of how farmers, working together, took on the large forces with which they were then faced — the large grain companies and the large railway companies — and established their own response, established their own company to handle their own grain and to cope with the powers that be at the time, with the large forces that were affecting their ability to make their living, and to put in place their own arrangements so that they would be masters in their own house, so that the farmers in Saskatchewan would have control over their own lives.

He also told me, my father also told me in detail about the establishment of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance office and how, prior to the establishment of that office, it was not possible to get fire insurance in our home town, that the line company simply did not provide it. He told me, and I've since confirmed that it's true, that that kind of fire insurance coverage was available in the cities from the so-called line companies, but it was available at prices that were thought to be away out of line compared to the loss experience that the companies were having in Saskatchewan.

And so the people of Saskatchewan got together through their duly elected government and formed their own insurance company in order to provide insurance to all of them, and to provide it at a rate that they could afford to pay. And that was the Saskatchewan Government Insurance office's mandate from the very beginning, and a mandate that they continued to fill up until this time.

Now we have, in Saskatchewan, insurance available to all people no matter where they live, no matter whether they have fire-fighting equipment in their home town, yet able to buy insurance coverage for their homes, and other kinds of insurance as our society has developed other kinds of insurance, and also to obtain it at rates that are affordable.

Now that, I think, is another example of how Saskatchewan people acting together, in this case through their government, have taken a particular problem that they all were faced with and have found a solution, a Saskatchewan-made solution in order to cope with that problem. And they did it and they did it very well.

And so we had, just to carry the example up into the modern days in the 1970s, the problem that the government of the day, the duly elected government of the day experienced in its dealings with the potash industry and in its ability to tax the potash industry. That story is well known, and how finally, out of frustration as much as anything else, the Saskatchewan government decided that it itself had to enter the potash industry and did so through the agency of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Now that is a debate which we're going to have in this House, as I understand the intentions of the government, when they bring forward a Bill to privatize that company. But there is another example of Saskatchewan people working together through their duly elected government

to establish arrangements to establish a company which would deal with a large problem which the government was then faced with, and deal with it through the agency of their duly elected government.

Now these things are just woven into the soul of Saskatchewan. They're woven into the fabric of this province at practically the point, Mr. Speaker, when you deal with questions like SGI and questions like the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and SaskTel, where it's practically in the genes. These are things that we have established ourselves in order to provide ourselves with a level of service which we couldn't otherwise have. These are things which we have done in order to provide ourselves with services at prices that we could afford. And these are institutions which are part of our history and part of our tradition and part of the very fabric of our society, and we're not going to let go of them very lightly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — And now our friends opposite come and they introduce this new word into the vocabulary of this province, this privatization word, and they tell us that all of the things that we've doing in this province — examples of which I've given to you — over all of these many years have been wrong; that it was a wrong-headed approach to have established SGI and have kept it in existence all these years; that it a wrong-headed approach to establish the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and keep it in existence for all of these years; and it was a wrong-headed approach, I take it, to establish the SaskTel and to provide the kind of service that SaskTel has provided.

The examples go on and on. The Saskatchewan Transportation Company comes to mind. I'm one of the members in this House who ride the buses of this province every once in a while, and I have a keen appreciation of the fact that we're providing bus service into communities where it is not economic to do so. All kinds of communities in this province receive bus service as a result of the fact that it is run by a corporation owned by the people of this province.

If it was owned by a corporation, the shares of which were owned by private shareholders, it would not be providing service to some of the communities which it is now providing, some of which are in the constituency represented by my friend from Melville. And these are arrangements, these are institutions, Mr. Speaker, which, as I say, our people are not going to let go of lightly, nor are they going to accept for a moment the notion that they were wrong in setting these up. And that's where the government argument is taking us.

The government argument, if you listen to it carefully and analyse it, is saying simply that to have set it up in that way was wrong; you've been mistaken over all of these decades. It is now time to get it right and to take that ownership out of the hands of the public and to return it to the private sector, private shareholders; that is the right way. What we did over the last 40 or 50 or 60 years is wrong and their way is better. Well that's a proposition, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province are just simply not going to accept.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — And there's evidence of that all over the place. You just have to walk down the streets of any community in this province and hear people talking about how the government has gone too far; about how the government's plan to sell part of SaskPower is wrong; about how the idea that we would be giving away our potash resources to foreign countries and foreign corporations is wrong. This is all you can hear in coffee shops these days.

It even overshadows discussions about the Minister of Finance's increased gas tax, or his other taxes, or his cuts in spending. This goes beyond that. This overshadows that and has become the dominant point of conversation on the streets and in the coffee shops and garages right across small town Saskatchewan and right through the cities.

What's at stake; what's at stake, Mr. Speaker? Well I submit that what's at stake is our way, the Saskatchewan way of dealing with problems with which we are faced. We have in this province established, more clearly than any other province in this country, a co-operative way of approaching our problems. The wheat pool is an example; SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) is an example; the power corporation is an example; SaskTel is an example; the bus company is an example, and it goes on and on. And the way that we've established is to work together to solve these problems, and the way in which we have typically done that is, through our elected government, take ownership of it, provide our own service, prove to ourselves that we in this province can do these things ourselves. We don't have to bring in any heavy hitters from the outside. We don't have to bring in any multinational companies from another country, or from another part of this country, in order to do things that we ourselves can do.

And that's what we've done. We've done it over and over again. And what our friends opposite seek to do in this privatization debate is to turn that upside down, to reverse it, to say that's not the Saskatchewan way. They're trying, in effect, to rewrite history; to say that the Saskatchewan way is some other way. And it's nonsense, Mr. Speaker, it's nonsense.

The fact of the matter is that everybody in Saskatchewan, with the possible exception of the people on the other side of this House, understands that the Crown corporations of this province are owned by the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — The people of this province are the shareholders in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. They are. They are, Mr. Minister of Finance. The people of this province are the owners of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. The people of Saskatchewan are the shareholders in SaskTel, and so on and on. They understand perfectly. Our friends opposite say that's not true. They think the government owns it.

And I say to him, what is the government? The government is the people of the province of Saskatchewan. The government is the persons elected by the people of Saskatchewan to run the government for the time being. Nothing is more certain that next election they're going to elect a different group to come and govern their affairs, but they are their affairs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — And it is idle nonsense, and about the height of sophistry to come in here and try and separate the notions of the people's government from the people themselves. People in Saskatchewan are not so naive and not so stupid as to accept such an argument.

There's another factor, Mr. Speaker, and an extremely important one, and it involves the question of controlling our own lives. Because of the factors that we're faced with in this province, we've had the particular history that we've had. We've developed our economy in a certain way. We have established our public corporations in a certain way in order to cope with these problems.

And they have given us control over so much of our own lives that sometimes we take that control for granted. Sometimes we forget that in the province of Nova Scotia, for example, the people don't have the kind of control that they have in Saskatchewan, because they don't own their telephone company; because they don't own their electrical utilities; because they don't own their transportation company.

As a result, they don't have the kind of control over their own everyday existence that we in Saskatchewan have. They are dependent upon decisions made by others. They are dependent upon decisions made by persons in the private sector who are running corporations for one purpose and one purpose only, and that is to collect a profit from it. Now there's nothing wrong with corporations running a business in order to recover a profit. But it is wrong when corporations are making decisions that affect me in a fundamental way in my life when I have the alternative of doing it myself, Mr. Speaker.

(1445)

And so we in Saskatchewan — to go back to my bus example, my transportation company example — have a transportation company which provides services to all kinds of communities in Saskatchewan, and it's an important service indeed. And no one could argue for a moment that if that transportation company had been developed by a private sector company like the Greyhound Bus Company, that we would have service in these communities, because clearly we would not.

But because we've established our own corporation to provide that service, we have a measure of control over our own lives. And it's an important measure of control because it provides transportation services to communities which would otherwise be entirely dependent upon automobiles.

So that's important, and that's what's at stake in this

argument. That's what's at stake, in my mind, the degree to which we are able to manage our own affairs, the degree to which we are able to do things ourselves and keep control over the things that are important to us.

And so, to take the example of SaskPower, if our friends are successful in selling off the gas side of the SaskPower corporation, that will mean that we, the people of Saskatchewan, will have lost a very large measure of control over the distribution and the sale of natural gas in this province.

Now why would we want to do that? Why would we willingly want to just barge in and give up those kind of economic levers, those kind of arrangements which permit us to remain masters in our own house, Mr. Speaker — masters in our own house? That's a foolish thing to do. It leaves us at the mercy of others' decisions.

Now it is no answer to that argument to say, well we're going to sell just a few shares to Saskatchewan people. That's no answer. We've heard that argument before. We heard that argument in the case of Saskoil. And that's right; that's what happened. There were a few shares sold, and most of them went to Saskatchewan people.

But in the ordinary course of market training, we know, from Saskoil's own corporate record now, that those shares are owned, to some alarming number — 75 per cent or something like that — by people from outside Saskatchewan. And it's not just a few shares any more, Mr. Speaker, because new share offerings have been offered, and a larger portion of Saskoil has been sold, and it's been sold to people from outside the province.

So it's no answer to say, we're only going to sell shares and it's only going to be a few shares and we're going to sell them to Saskatchewan people if we can; we're going to sell them to employees. That's no answer because we know, from the Saskoil experience and from our experience generally, that in the end those shares wind up in the hands of the large pools of capital in Canada and elsewhere.

Now I know where our friends opposite are coming from. People on this side of the House know, and a lot of people in the province of Saskatchewan know where they're coming from on this issue, Mr. Speaker. It is entirely consistent with their notion of a private enterprise, purely market-driven economy — entirely consistent with that.

The picture that my leader paints of the Premier riding his surf-board — riding on top of the waves, saying to the province, well this is the way it is; I have no control over this; we can't deal with these forces; these are international forces over which we have no control. And all I can do is to somehow keep erect on the top of this surf-board, but I have no way in which I can control the waves.

And my party answers to that, nonsense; there are many things you can do to control the waves; there are many things you can do to control your situation. But if you're going to sell off all of the levers that you have that enable you to have any control over your own existence, if you're going to sell off, for example, the gas side of

SaskPower, you're going to sell off your control over the natural gas production, sale and distribution in this province.

And why would you do that? Why would you just make yourself the captive of a group of private shareholders? They may start out as Saskatchewan shareholders, but they'll wind up with the bulk of those shares owned by large pools of investment capital in other parts of the country. And my friends opposite know that as certain as they're sitting there. Why would we do that?

For us, Mr. Speaker, it makes no sense that government would just simply give away that kind of economic levers that they could well use, they could use every day for the benefit of the people of this province.

I must touch on the potash corporation argument now, although I want to save that, in a specific sense, for a later day. But I want to deal with the potash corporation. We've been hearing talk from members opposite about selling or privatizing the potash corporation for a long time. Their enthusiasm for the project ebbs and flows depending upon what their polls are telling them, or the state of the industry.

But we have always argued, and history shows, that the potash corporation has been a very, very profitable investment for the people of this province over the course of its life. It has been a very profitable investment. And granted, like any potash company, it can't make a profit while the market is away down. But the market for potash is a cyclical market and it's now on the way up. And in most years, in the vast majority of years, you can run any potash corporation, that is run at all efficiently, at a profit.

The potash corporation has consistently made a profit and most often a large profit whenever market conditions have been anything like decent, and they are now. And as a result, in 1988, which was not a particularly good year for potash, where the price is still on the upswing, PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan) made \$106 million — \$106 million.

Well that, my friends, is a lot of money. That would go almost half-way to pay for the deficit that the government has incurred . . . or it expects to incur in this present year — \$100 million will furnish a lot of schools; \$100 million will pay for a lot of health care; \$100 million to the farmers of Saskatchewan looks like about the size of a drought payment that they should be getting this year.

An Hon. Member: — Would pay for a prescription drug plan and a dental plan.

Mr. Mitchell: — Yes, my colleague says it'd pay for a prescription drug plan and a dental plan and have a lot of money left over — a lot of money left over.

Now why would we be intent on getting rid of that, Mr. Speaker? Is that not the goose that lays the golden egg? And is not the selling of it, at this point or at any point, the killing of the goose that lays the golden eggs? It makes no sense. It makes no sense at all.

So my argument, just to recap, Mr. Speaker, just to

summarize, my argument is that it is folly, it is pure folly for the government of this province to be going to the people and saying, we're going to sell shares to you in these Crown corporations. The answer, and the people know the answer better than you and I do, the answer is that they already own those shares. And you're not doing us any favour when you sell back to us what we already own.

And we're already profiting from those Crown corporations. When they make a profit, we make a profit. Because the profit that is earned is not going out of the province in the form of dividends on any shares, it's staying right here and is paying for the essential services that we have in this province that we require a good deal of money in order to run. And it is the height of folly for the government to be selling off income producing assets as they propose to do.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there is in all of this the heavy hand of patronage. There is in all of this the heavy hand of patronage. There is in the little privatizations that we've seen, little special deals with this company, little special deals with that, the Weyerhaeuser deal being the best example that we'll probably ever have, where a large, thriving, important industry which had made a great deal of money over its lifetime, a great deal of money, was sold.

And I put "sold" in heavy quotation marks because it was a different kind of a sale than we had ever seen — a very different kind of a sale — a sale where you . . . not only did they not get anything down, there was no down payment required. Actually, if you study the deal hard enough, you will find we actually paid them \$7 million in order to come into the deal, by virtue of a little deal we made with roads. So not only no down payment, but a reverse, a little incentive for them to come in.

And then to buy the whole operation, including the plant and the harvesting rights to all that forest, at a bargain basement price over a very long period of time, and the only years in which they're required to make a payment are years in which that company makes a profit, which is rarely made by any company in that industry. Only in times when the market is at its highest level can you reasonably expect to get the kind of profit that Weyerhaeuser has to make in order to have to make an annual payment under that agreement. Other than that, it was a good deal.

Now why would we do that? I mean, talk about killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. Now we heard, and we continue to hear to this day, the kind of distorted and misleading advertising that we were losing \$94,000 a day. The reality is that we were not. The reality is that that company had been returning a handsome profit for a long time, and the reality is that that operation now is returning a large profit. It's just that in a certain very short period of time, when the market was way down, the company had lost money — naturally, as it normally would.

But in the long haul that was not a losing proposition, and my friends opposite know it. And when they ran their radio ads and make their speeches about Prince Albert pulp losing that kind of money, they simply know it is not

correct, Mr. Speaker. They know it is not in accordance with the facts.

Well my point is simply that it makes no sense to make that kind of a deal. We on this side of the House are not against a flexible approach to the question of public ownership. We think there are times where it is extremely important that the public sector be involved. We think there are other times when it is not appropriate for the public sector to be involved.

It may be appropriate to get out of public ownership or to go back into it. It all depends on what's happening. It's a practical, pragmatic question requiring a hard-headed answer, but not a give-away and certainly not the kind of hidebound ideological approach that our friends opposite appear to have on this question when they say public ownership is bad, private ownership is good, and we're going to move as much public ownership into the private sector as the people will put up with. And that, Mr. Speaker, is what they're doing.

It's not the Saskatchewan way. It's transferring wealth. It's an entirely inappropriate thing to do. It is an ideological and hidebound position that they deal from; it is an ideological and hidebound position that they deal from, and if they could do it all tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, and think they could get away with it, they would. That's my point; that's my point.

And they go out and take their polls and they learn, well, it's not popular to sell it off to a company like Weyerhaeuser, so we'll do it a little differently this time. We'll issue a few shares and then people won't mind that so much and, particularly if we offer those shares to employees, then they won't mind so much. But we know, Mr. Speaker, and experience has proven and, particularly with Saskoil, it has been shown that that kind of privatization is a guarantee that those shares and, therefore, control of this company will wind up in the hands of non-Saskatchewan people. And we in this province simply can't afford to deal away that kind of control over our own lives. We must remain masters in our own house.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I'll be opposing the Bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1500)

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me today, Mr. Speaker, to enter into this debate.

I listened with great interest last Friday to the member from Moose Jaw North, and I must say that he hasn't lost any of his eloquence that I've known from him before. But I think the public in the province don't wish to mix up eloquence and fact, because as I just finished listening to the member from Saskatoon Fairview and him talking about the roots of his family and that type of thing, those roots aren't much different than most of us in this province who've come from pioneering families. And I

respect those views, the things that the member from Fairview talked about.

But I guess where the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, get a little mixed up sometime, is that even though we have this common roots, these common bonds, these same life experiences as Saskatchewanians, there's only ever been about a third of the people in this province that have subscribed to the views of the member from Fairview, and that's fair, that's . . . If you want to get into politics, that's fair, as probably there are only a third of the people in this province have subscribed to the views of the Progressive Conservative Party or the Liberal Party, for that matter.

But what we can't say, Mr. Speaker, what we can't say when we're talking about the social interaction of members of our community from our pioneers onward, is that social interaction and working together are strictly the views of the NDP Party, because they're not. But any of us that have lived out there in small town Saskatchewan on a farm know that when the Sask Wheat Pool or UGG or some of the farm organizations that I belong to to this day get together and do things for a reason, it is people interacting because they have a common goal.

And I can think about the rink board that we used to have in my home town of Baildon. I can think of lots of reasons for people to get together, because I couldn't afford to build a rink and turn the lights on by myself. But when I got together with my neighbours and we all took a little bit out of hip national or we put on a whist drive or a bottle drive or we'd run a booth at the sports day, we raised enough money so that everyone in that community could have the lights on in the rink at night.

And that made a lot of sense to our small community, just as it made a lot of sense, as the member from Fairview said, for grain farmers in particular to band together into organizations such as UGG and the pools. Because they were dealing with some monoliths, one railroad at that time, one or two very large grain trading companies that weren't even Canadian-based, it made a great deal of sense to try and work together within a system that would provide a better livelihood.

And I don't think you would find anyone in this province who has those types of roots and who's had family members go through those types of experiences, would ever say no to that historical perspective because it was right then, as parts of it are right today.

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, why I want to get into this debate today on this thing is because as I listened to the members opposite over the last couple of days, they keep seeming to want to mix the record of the NDP administration from 1971 to 1982 with what has happened in a historical perspective in Saskatchewan in the years preceding that.

And I find that a little bit hypocritical, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they would take that rationalization to the point that they have. Because even during the years of the late premier Douglas, and I mean I was only a child through a great deal of that time, I don't ever remember so much of this mixing of what we do as a society and when

we socially interact as we do with the hard-core tenets of socialism like we've had from the members opposite.

And I never thought of the power lines being strung through rural Saskatchewan as being a nationalization thing that the NDP always like to talk about. That was providing a need when no one else was there to provide a need. That was groups of people getting together in rural telephone companies and going out and put up telephone poles and stringing wire to provide a need for the members of that community. And the government was there to facilitate the change, the technology, the change that those people wanted to see happen in their lives. They wanted electric lights and they wanted a telephone on the wall. It helped them in their business; it helped them in many ways. And by getting together they were able to achieve that.

And I guess, as we went on, some people in the NDP Party said, well yes, this social interaction that people have had in Saskatchewan because of our climate and our distance to markets and a lot of things means that we should get into the direct ownership of things that were already there and working, in some cases by other people in Saskatchewan, and they happened to be people in the private sector.

And I think about the nationalizations that took place during the 1970s, and I ask myself some very basic questions about them and what they did for my province, and what they did for me as an individual, and where it's going in the future.

And I think about the potash corporation which the member talked so eloquently about and about the returns to our province, and I know for a fact that it cost a lot of money to nationalize the potash companies. I mean, everybody knows that. We spent millions, hundreds of millions of dollars, I'm told, in U.S. funds to purchase those mines, and basically those funds went back to people in the United States of America. And I guess that's fair, if that's where the money went that's . . . so be it.

But anyone that honestly believes for a minute that we were able to put out those kinds of dollars, of taxpayers' dollars, and we didn't have to pay interest on them, that they weren't a debt against the potash corporation, is living in a fool's paradise. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will take a lot more than six or seven years at the profits that the member talks about to erase that debt, because obviously he's servicing far more than the initial debt on the potash corporation.

And I think about this . . . people, jobs. We went through this great exercise, we borrowed all this money, money that by and large didn't stay in the province of Saskatchewan, and we didn't create one new job by doing it — not one new job. The people that were working there were still working there, they were still getting up in the morning and taking their lunch to work, and their job was there, and that's commendable. At least we didn't lose any jobs. But there was no great creation of jobs by spending this 5 or 6 or \$700 million — not one.

What it did do was create a few jobs elsewhere because they took our taxpayers' money and went looking for

places to build other mines in direct competition with the people that we had working in the mines here. And it might be a great job creation project in New Brunswick, or maybe some day in Manitoba, but it certainly wasn't here.

And I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this whole exercise pointed out to me was that maybe we'd lost sight of working together as people in this province, and we got thinking more about political control of people than anything else. And it seemed to me that the basic tenets of nationalization of the things that the NDP Party were talking about was forgetting about people as individuals in our community, but saying yes, you will work for the Government of Saskatchewan, you will work for the people of Saskatchewan, but we'll exercise a certain amount of political control over you.

And that was the part that I find so dangerous and insidious about the remarks made by the members opposite because what they're saying, when they're talking about the people, they're not talking about each and every one of us. Because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, an individual can go to work for me, for anybody else in this province, and if he isn't beholden to me for a job, he isn't beholden to me, he isn't going to have vote the same way that I do.

And I think that the members opposite should think about that a little bit. And obviously some of them did because there are some well related cabinet documents, or documents from some of the Crowns that have floated around this Chamber, and I don't want to run through them again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where some members of that NDP government said after 11 years of perspective, that hey, maybe this thing is a little bit more expensive than the taxpayer of this province can handle in a reasonable way; and yes, maybe we've made some mistakes on the political side because people are beginning not to feel a part of that social interaction which has been so common in this province.

And they felt strongly enough about it that they wanted to document it, and they wanted to get into the process of implementing it because they realized that after 11 years that people were not feeling comfortable with it because people didn't want to be beholden for their political allegiances because of working for the government. People didn't want to be paying more taxes because the thing was not an economic success.

And so they were willing to put their names in writing on documents to start that process where they indeed would do some of the things that members on this side of the legislature have been talking about for the last couple of years.

And I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is important for people around this province to come out and express their views, as I think the member from Qu'Appelle-Wolseley has tried to do in public meetings around this province, because certainly I, as a legislator, and I believe, certainly as the member from Saskatoon Fairview is a legislator, neither one of us have all the answers and never will have in this social interaction which occurs in this province, because we are unique.

So I think it is important that we go out and we talk to people about this process, and I would hope very much that in SaskEnergy or some of the other things that I believe people should have a direct share in ownership in, that there will be hundreds of thousands of them. And I would hope that with the education and the perspective that we in this province have gained over the last 80-some years as we've watched the world evolve and as we've watched ourselves evolve in our farming, in our business, in every other walk of life, that people in this province are indeed better educated, more intelligent, and more capable of making decisions than they were when my grandmother came from England and moved into a two-room sod house south-west of Assiniboia in 1907. And I'm sure she's very proud of the fact that all her descendants through time have used that education system, have used our learning experiences, because if we do nothing as we go through life except learn from our mistakes, we'll have bettered ourselves.

And I would like to think that as I have gone along and learned from her and learned from my father and learned about their experiences — because they were involved in those social interactions which we did as a society to make ourselves better — that we are better prepared today than we ever were before to make some of those decisions about how we will control and run our own destinies. And I would like think that I'm intelligent enough to take an ownership position in one of the things which is most basic to me — and that is heating my home — and that I could take that ownership position and, along with it, the responsibility to make sure that that ownership carried on into the future and it provided for me and my family in the best way possible.

And I think the people opposite in this legislature do a great discredit to the vast majority of people in this province when they say, you are not smart or intelligent enough to act in a social way and control some of the things which shape our destinies. And when they say it has to be the government shaping those destinies, I think history has showed us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, over time, that that isn't true, and there are a great many people in this province who don't subscribe to that. And those people are not traitors to their province. Those people have worked and built right alongside the people that feel the opposite way.

(1515)

And I think the democratic system, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when these things come to an election every four years, give us the opportunity to voice that. But I get a little bit tired of saying, the government is the people — which it is — but only when it is the NDP who are the government. And that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I cannot accept.

We're moving into an age . . . and I think everyone agrees that the pace of change is more rapid today than it's ever been before. Change not necessarily is always good. I think it's important that you cope with change and you manage change. And for this province to manage the change which must occur as we move into that next century, I want to make sure that as we do get into different trading situations that require processing plants,

manufacturing as farming perhaps changes in some ways to meet those trading demands, as we look around at the world with other people who are talking about the same things as we are — and they come from all social economic structures; they come from all the different philosophical structures in the world, and many members of the Commonwealth: New Zealand, Australia — people that have had some of the same life experiences and the same social interactions that we've had here in western Canada, they're talking about it, as are the Chinese and the Soviets and the French, all through the European Economic Community.

And this process of privatization, of public participation, of people — intelligent, well-educated people — interacting in their economies is being talked about by billions of people around the world. And it would be very foolish for us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this province not to talk about it, not to explore it, and see if perhaps, for the taxpayer of this province, for the next generation of people who will follow behind us, it makes economic sense, and it also makes sense for those social things which we feel so strongly about.

And I don't believe Saskatchewan is an island unto its own. The members opposite would like people in this province to believe that they are so terribly unique that they cannot fit into this world-wide process. And I admit we are unique in some ways, but we're not so unique that we can't interact with all these other people. And I think by interacting with them, and seeing what they're doing and borrowing the best, as I think we've done over many generations, we can go through this process and, I think, come out for the better. I think we can maintain our health care system as the best in Canada.

I believe that we can maintain an education system that's going to prepare our children for the future and allow them to interact with all of these other people.

And I believe we can do the things that are necessary — the paper mills and the alfalfa plants and the red meat processing — the things that others in the world have done and which are so applicable to this province, to generate the wealth, the economic well-being that will make us go into the 21st century with all of those things that we've come to know and love and hold dear.

And so I think it's totally irresponsible for the members opposite to dismiss this process simply because only these things can be done by an NDP government, who then become the people. And I think that was their great failing in 1982, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because they had become the government on one side and the people were over here, and the people did not like the nationalizations. The people did not like having their politics dictated to them, and the people said: I am intelligent and well educated and I have learned from the past experiences of my parents, and I want to interact in this economy and I am not going to simply have the government dictate my place in this economy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — So I would ask simply, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we go through this exercise, this debate on

public participation, that the public out there judge it on its merits; judge it against what has happened in the past, most definitely, because our elders learned from hard experience, and they've applied it, and we've moved through the generations.

And I would also ask that the members opposite, when they are talking about participating in the Saskatchewan economy, simply don't rule out the two-thirds to 70 per cent of the people that have never been hard-core members of the NDP Party and who wish to participate in this province, and I ask that the members opposite just simply give those of us who have never been in NDP the chance to participate and interact socially with our friends and neighbours in our communities.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I've mentioned earlier in this session, it is quite obvious that this Bill, Bill No. 1, the privatization Bill, is the main priority of the PC government. Privatization, that's their main priority, Mr. Deputy Speaker — not health, not education. In fact, privatization is so important to them that they actually consider the possibility of putting privatization in our children's school curriculum.

Well I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that privatization and partisan politics has no place in the class-room. The PC government has no business tampering with our children. I believe that the people of Saskatchewan and the parents of Saskatchewan will be appalled to consider that the . . . to realize that this PC government is considering the possibility of putting privatization in the class-rooms.

That's their priority, that's their priority, Mr. Deputy Speaker — privatization. And they're bent on privatizing Saskatchewan's heritage no matter what the price to Saskatchewan people. And we've already experienced PC privatization in this province, and I say it's a betrayal of Saskatchewan men and women. PC privatization and cut-backs . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order.

Ms. Simard: — . . . are harming the province's future prosperity, and let's look at the facts in this regard. In 1981, before the PC government started on its privatization . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member did not adjourn debate on Friday, was interrupted by the clock. The only way she could proceed with her speech is by leave of the Assembly. You have to ask for leave of the Assembly.

Ms. Simard: — Okay, I so ask for leave, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Leave not granted.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: — Member for Westmount, what is

your point of order?

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, could you provide the appropriate citations for me?

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. On the point of order . . . Order. On the point of order of the member from Westmount, the member for Regina Lakeview did not adjourn debate on Friday last. She could have come in at the beginning of the debate today and resumed. Another speaker was allowed to rise and speak in the debate. So no member may speak twice on the question.

(1530)

Mr. Brockelbank: — I'd like to speak just briefly further on the point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When the debate began today, I believe the ruling is that the member must be present.

The member for Lakeview was not present today when the debate began. Her first opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to speak, was when the member from Thunder Creek rose. The member from Lakeview was on her feet. You recognized the member from Thunder Creek. Now that was the first opportunity the member had to get back in the debate.

I have yet, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. It's very difficult for me to hear the member from Saskatoon Westmount.

Mr. Brockelbank: — I appreciate your comment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I have yet to hear the citation. I want to hear the citation on which you base your ruling.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Page 16, rule 28: "No Member may speak twice to a question . . ." The member lost her place when she was in the middle of her speech on Friday, did not resume debate today when the debate resumed. It has no reference to whether the member was in her place or not. The debate continues.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to follow up on what my colleague was talking about prior to being ruled out of order in terms of being able to enter this debate.

As my colleague said, that this Bill, the Bill to create the privatization department is the first Bill that this government submitted to our Legislative Assembly in this sitting of the legislature. This Bill, the Bill to privatize everything in Saskatchewan really does indicate to the people of Saskatchewan where this government's priorities lie. This government is not about our future. This government is not about creating new and innovative programs for Saskatchewan citizens. This government is about selling off our assets to their corporate friends and their political cronies.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government opposite created the department of privatization last year, about a year ago. And when the minister of privatization, the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, published what he called the department's objectives and guide-lines, he

stated that the objective of the department of privatization was to ensure the following. He said that the department's objective, number one, would be full benefit from the use of public assets to increase employment and create economic and investment opportunity. The second objective of his department was increased opportunities for personal and employee ownership. And a third objective of his department was more effective and efficient public services at good value for money.

This is what the minister of privatization claimed to be his government's objectives — increased employment, individual ownership, and public services.

Now the real question in this debate is whether or not this government has met those objectives since they introduced their privatization ideology. Have they met those objectives, or have they failed?

Well let's look at employment. That's the first objective of privatization. This government privatized the highway's maintenance work and it meant over 400 Saskatchewan citizens lost their jobs. Within six months of privatization of Saskoil, this government allowed 25 per cent of the Saskoil labour force to be laid off. Within one year of the privatization of SED Systems, which is now owned by Fleet Aerospace of Ontario, over 70 SED employees in Saskatoon lost their jobs. And when this government privatized the school-based children's dental program, more than 400 dental workers lost their jobs in our province.

So when you take into consideration all of the privatizations that this government has been involved in, close to 1,000 Saskatchewan citizens have lost their jobs. That's what privatization has meant, and this government still has SaskTel to privatize, SaskPower to privatize, Saskatchewan Government Insurance to privatize, as well as a number of other publicly owned corporations. So from your own perspective that privatization would create employment, PC privatization simply isn't working.

And let's look at the second objective of privatization. The second objective of this government is to increase the individual ownership of Saskatchewan. I want to review what privatization has meant in terms of Saskatchewan people owning and controlling their own companies.

Privatization of Saskatchewan Minerals, which was the sodium sulphate plant at Chaplin, and the plant at Fox Valley along with the peat plant at Carrot River, has meant that those two companies are now owned by companies outside of Saskatchewan — one is from Ontario and one is from Quebec.

The privatization of the Prince Albert Pulp Company has meant that all of the assets that were formerly owned by all of us here in Saskatchewan were sold to Weyerhaeuser of Tacoma, Washington. Not one share of Weyerhaeuser Canada is owned in Saskatchewan; all shares of Weyerhaeuser are owned by people living in Tacoma, Washington.

Now let's talk about the PC privatization of Saskatchewan Power. They sold off a drag-line, and they sold off a

coal-mine to Manalta Coal of Alberta. Once again, is the drag-line and the coal-mine owned by individual people here in Saskatchewan? The answer is no. This drag-line and this coal-mine is owned by Fred Mannix of Manalta Coal, who resides in Alberta.

Now within one year of privatization of Saskatchewan Oil, 75 per cent of the privately held shares were held by people outside of Saskatchewan. So has the privatization of Saskoil meant individual Saskatchewan ownership and control? And the answer is obviously no. Seventy-five per cent of those shares are owned by people outside of Saskatchewan. And now the government, the PC government, is proposing to sell off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to foreign nations.

So PC privatization, which they say as one of their objectives is to create individual Saskatchewan ownership, is simply not working. We have SED Systems owned by Fleet Aerospace of Ontario. Sask Minerals is now owned by a company in Ontario and a company in Quebec. PAPCO, the P.A. pulp and paper corporation, is now owned by a company in Tacoma, Washington. And the drag-line and the coal-mine is now owned by Manalta Coal of Alberta. And three-quarters of the shares in Saskoil are held by people outside of our Saskatchewan.

PC privatization means selling out Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan citizens no longer own and control their own companies. This government is about delivering our assets to their corporate friends in eastern Canada and in the United States, and not in ensuring that those assets stay here, in Saskatchewan, for the benefit of Saskatchewan people.

Now let's talk about the privatization of public services. They said their third objective was to ensure that there would be more effective and efficient public services at good value for money in Saskatchewan. Well let's review the record. The PCs privatized the highways equipment and the highways workers. And what does PC privatization of highways mean? It means deteriorating Saskatchewan highways.

This government privatized the school-based children's dental plan. And what does it mean? It means that people, particularly in rural Saskatchewan, no longer have access to a school-based program, and they in fact have to travel many, many kilometres in order to get access to that service. The PC privatization of the dental plan has meant that those dental clinics have been closed in over 300 Saskatchewan communities.

And now this government is proposing to privatize SaskPower — the natural gas side of SaskPower. And what will that mean? The privatization of SaskPower assets has already meant an increase in utility rates. The unjustifiable PC plan to split SaskPower into four separate corporations obviously has led to further increases in our natural gas rates and our electrical rates because we have four different bureaucracies trying to administer a corporation that used to be administered by one. Privatization of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has meant rate increases and steep . . . and poorer services.

Let's talk about the PC privatization of our provincial

parks. This privatization has led to higher service costs for Saskatchewan people who can't afford to go on high-flying trips to Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong and Japan and China and India, like our Premier does. Those parks have been there for Saskatchewan people to enjoy and use as part of their vacation holidays. And what has happened? We've seen those kinds of services increase in price and we've seen reduced services. So PC privatization has meant poorer services for Saskatchewan people.

It's obvious that the PC privatization in our province is failing. The PC privatization has failed to meet any of their own objectives. PC privatization has meant fewer jobs, fewer services, and reduced economic activity for Saskatchewan people. PC privatization has meant lost jobs, lost revenue, lost control over our own economic endeavours, and it's meant fewer services.

Now some people would say that the PC privatization has to do with lowering our deficit and reducing our taxes, but let's look at that. In 1983 they privatized some of SaskPower's assets. The power rates increased and the deficit went up and our taxes went up and our taxes went up. In 1984 they privatized operations . . . or pardon me, they privatized operations, and we saw more assets in the Department of Highways going outside of our province. And what happened there? Four hundred workers were fired; we have deteriorating highways. They haven't saved us any money — the deficit has increased, and our taxes have gone up.

In 1985 they privatized Saskoil. Once again, taxes increased and our deficit increased. In 1987 they privatized the school-based children's dental program and SED Systems. Once again, taxes increased and our deficit increased. In 1988 they privatized Sask Minerals and SaskCOMP and a major part of Saskatchewan telephones. Once again, taxes increased and our deficit increased. So PC privatization has not meant reduced taxes for Saskatchewan taxpayers, and it has not meant that our deficit has decreased; in fact, our deficit keeps going up and our taxes keep going up.

(1545)

I want to turn for a moment to some of this government's privatization initiatives, and I want to talk about, in particular, the privatization of the natural gas side of Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Now in the spring of 1988, the Deputy Premier of our province launched the privatization of the natural gas division of SaskPower. Since this government opposite took office in 1982, the long-term debt of Saskatchewan Power Corporation has doubled, which they now claim is a problem.

It's like the Devine deficit they have created with their string of deficit budgets. Their mismanagement creates a problem, then they announce that they realize they have a problem and they have to get rid of some of those assets. And yet they now propose to build the \$1 billion political boondoggle down at Rafferty-Alameda.

And I was pleased to hear that the federal licence has been lifted by the courts, and this government has been shown for what it is, that this government can't be trusted

when it comes to the environment in our province. And environmentalists in our province have a great victory, environmentalists in Canada have a great victory today, because the federal government . . . or the federal courts have shown this government for what it really is, and that this government can't be trusted.

Now I want to review the profits of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation for the past 10 years. For the past 10 years the natural gas division of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has made a profit every year. That's enabled SPC (Saskatchewan Power Corporation) to moderate the effective losses on the electrical side, which has suffered a loss in five out of the last six years under this PC government. In other words, an integrated Saskatchewan Power Corporation has been beneficial to Saskatchewan consumers.

Now in late April of 1988, the PC government suddenly announced that it had privatized Saskatchewan Power Corporation's natural reserves by selling 510 billion cubic feet of natural gas to Saskoil. That's a huge amount of gas, Mr. Speaker. That is about six times its total annual sales volume of gas. They have privatized an amount of natural gas equivalent to 15 years consumption by the 232,000 residential consumers in Saskatchewan. That's what this government's done.

Now this sale was made to Saskatchewan Oil which is now a private corporation owned by 75 per cent of the shareholders outside of Saskatchewan. And the sale price announced for this privatization of natural gas is \$325 million, but the market value of that volume of natural gas at the current rate is \$1.93 per 1,000 cubic feet at the Alberta border. That is \$984 million.

This government sold \$984 million worth of natural gas for \$325 million. This government has delivered the assets, owned and controlled by the people of our province, to shareholders in Saskoil who live outside of our province, and that simply is not fair and it needs to be stopped.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask you to get the Minister of Education under control. He certainly would have been taken to task if he was in any class-room in Saskatchewan; he's acting inappropriately. And so I'd ask the Minister of Education to listen with some interest.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the provincial treasury . . . not the provincial treasury nor the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has actually received the \$325 million, so-called purchase price. Now what they've received is about \$125 million in cash. The Deputy Premier has tried to explain that the balance is composed of 13 million Saskoil shares whose value is uncertain. He said that there's \$5 million in Saskoil share purchase warrants; that cash flow royalties are to be paid over five years. There's a promissory note from Saskoil. And then they have some growth overriding royalty.

Now that's a long bow to draw, Mr. Speaker, but for my money, we've got a billion dollar asset that has been given to Saskoil, and we've received \$125 million in cash, and that's it.

Now these are the people that like to make deals; these are the people that like to dine and wine at the Diplomat and the Ramada Renaissance, and these are the kind of deals that these people engage in. They have a \$1 billion asset that they've only gotten \$125 million worth of money from. And all I can say is, some business operators, members opposite.

Now on May 9 of last year the PC government admitted that it was splitting up Sask Power Corporation and they were creating three new companies on the gas side. Now this fragmentation of SPC makes absolutely no sense. It is the third SPC reorganization since former PC Party president George Hill became the president of our corporation at the end of 1986.

Now after initially denying that they were planning to privatize the natural gas side of SPC, the PCs have finally admitted — finally admitted — that they are indeed planning to do so. George Hill created Sask(atchewan) Energy, the natural gas side of SPC, so that they could try to privatize it.

Now earlier today, in question period, the Minister of Education said, under absolutely no circumstances would there be a privatization course brought into Saskatchewan class-rooms. Now I'd like to be able to believe that Minister of Education. I'd like to be able to take him at his word — and he shakes his head.

But the Deputy Premier last spring, when we asked him whether the division of Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the split-up of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, would lead to privatization, that member, the member from Souris-Cannington, said no. He said no. And at that time I believed him. You like to think that when people answer questions in this legislature, that you can believe them, that you can take them at their word.

But I have come to discover, after two years of sitting in this legislature and observing the PC government, that you cannot take them at their word. The minister, the Deputy Premier, said to us that Sask(atchewan) Energy, the natural gas side of SPC, would not be privatized. And now we learn in January of 1989 that this government is planning on selling off the natural gas side of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. These people cannot be trusted and you cannot take them for their word. Their word is worth nothing.

Now the Minister of Education said to us today, there will be no attempts whatsoever to introduce a privatization course into Saskatchewan schools. I'd like to be able to believe him. But based on your past . . . the past practices of your ministers, Mr. Minister of Education, I can't believe you; I simply can't believe you. And I suspect that if you were allowed to fire the curriculum advisory committees, which you'd like to do, I suspect that if you continue to act in the way you've acted in the past in not collaborating with the partners in education, that we could very well see a propaganda course for the government members opposite.

Now in the history of our province we have not had the political propaganda or the ideology of the government in our class-rooms. We've not had that. Children have been

able to learn, and learn a number of things. They've learned about the mixed economy; we've learned about private enterprise; we've learned about co-operatives; and we've learned about public ownership. No particular ideology of any government in this province has ever been prevalent in class-rooms.

And I would advise the members opposite that Saskatchewan people will not put up with any kind of PC propaganda course designed to ram your particular philosophy and ideology down the throats of Saskatchewan school teachers and school children. There is no place for politics in our schools — none whatsoever — and I would urge the members opposite to be mindful of that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — We will be watching with great interest, because we know that the PC's propaganda on television that we're all subjected to regularly at our own expense, taxpayers' expense, isn't working. We know that the dozens of community meetings that you've held around this province aren't working; that people don't agree with your privatization strategy.

We know that your polling is telling you that you are failing in your endeavours to ram privatization down Saskatchewan people's throats and that Saskatchewan people don't want it. And now this government and the PC members, the PC Party members, think their only place to sort of proselytize and propagandize Saskatchewan people is with the young people. And Saskatchewan parents won't put up with that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to continue when it comes to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. The privatization of this utility makes absolutely no sense, and it will not produce positive benefits for Saskatchewan people. It means that this government has sold off a Saskatchewan energy resource to an out-of-province company. It means a weaker and less efficient Saskatchewan Power Corporation. It will mean sharp utility increases to Saskatchewan consumers. A PC user-pay philosophy will mean much higher rates for farms and homes and businesses, particularly in rural Saskatchewan.

Now this government's engaged in a number of privatizations. They've sold the Saskatchewan Mining (and) Development Corporation, which last year alone made \$60 million, or a 19 per cent return on our investment. They sold it.

They sold Saskoil. In 1984, Saskoil made \$44 million in profits; that stayed in our province. In 1985, it made \$40.6 million worth of profit; that stayed in our province. And now when Saskoil has a profit, the dividends are paid to people outside of our province.

They sold this Manalta coal mine . . . or they sold the coal mine, the Poplar River coal mine, to Manalta of Alberta. Now let's just talk about what this little deal was about. They sold a \$45 million drag-line to Manalta Coal of Alberta. Now in order to make that purchase, Manalta had to borrow the money, and the Government of

Saskatchewan guaranteed the loan — that's what this government did, and this enabled Manalta, a privately-owned Alberta corporation to avoid issuing a prospectus or release financial information to provincial security regulatory agencies across our province.

And then in November of 1984 the government privatized the Poplar River mine at Coronach, once again to Manalta Coal of Alberta. Now the then minister, the member from Yorkton, admitted in his public statement that the province had a \$129 million investment in the Poplar River coal mine, and the sale price to Manalta was \$102 million — great business people here. And the province financed \$89 million of that purchase price for Manalta.

The only way these guys can attract business to our province is to give it to them, give our assets to those out-of-province business people or guarantee loans. That's the only way these people can attract business. So in other words, we had an asset worth \$129 million, this government sold it to Manalta for \$102 million, and then we lent them \$89 million to make the deal — some business men and women over there.

Then the PC Government entered into a 30-year coal purchase agreement to purchase coal supplies from Manalta to supply the Poplar River power station at Coronach. Now that, my friends, is a bad privatization deal, but it's a good deal for Manalta Coal.

An Hon. Member: — Could you give us an example of privatization . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — The member opposite asked, any good examples of privatization?

The PC privatization strategy should be judged in four ways. Does that PC privatization strategy deliver public assets to people who reside outside of Saskatchewan; does that PC privatization strategy mean lost jobs; does that PC privatization mean lost revenue to our province; and does that PC privatization strategy mean lost services and increased costs and services to Saskatchewan people? And does that PC privatization strategy mean an increasing debt, an increase in taxes? And on all of those, all of those, members opposite, men and women of the PC party, your privatization strategy has failed on every count — every count.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Now I want to talk about highways.

The Speaker: — Order. I think constant interference is not necessary.

Ms. Atkinson: — Now the Minister of Education likes to chat and rant and rave at the back of the hall. If the Minister of Education wants to have a dialogue with me, he can come down and sit in his seat and we can discuss privatization. I will note with interest what this minister has to say about privatization. He's great at sitting at the back of the hall, clapping. He's good at that, but he rarely enters into any kind of debate in our province. This minister is rarely in the legislature, and when he is he

doesn't have the . . .

(1600)

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

I think that, you know, we should refrain from comments like the minister's never in the legislature, and that's . . . Order, order, order. Order, order.

I think, you know, personal references don't add to the debate on either side, on either side. And perhaps if we just get on with the debate.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will take your words under advisement. I think this minister's a bit sensitive about the fact that I am now the Education critic, that he has been shown for what kind of a minister he is in this legislature on several occasions, and so the only way that he can get at me is by shouting and screaming when I'm on my feet in this Legislative Assembly.

Now I want to talk about what this government did to highways. On April 1983 the then minister of Highways, Jim Garner, fired 157 Highways workers because he said that:

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.

And I quote **Hansard**, April 18, 1983, and that's what this government said.

In March of 1984, Garner's further privatization of Highways led to the firing of a further 237 workers. He said at that time, and I quote:

It's freedom of choice. I'm giving them the opportunity to transfer to the private sector.

As quoted in the **Leader-Post**, March 23, 1984.

And then in May of 1984, Garner privatized more than 400 pieces of highways equipment in our province worth \$40 million. And these great entrepreneurs opposite, these great business people, only collected \$6 million in revenue; \$6 million in revenue, that's all they collected. And many of the purchasers were from people outside of Saskatchewan. Those assets have left our province for good — they're in the United States, they are in Alberta, they're in Ontario and Manitoba, and you can sure tell by the highways; you can sure tell by the highways.

This high-flying government that likes to fly all over Saskatchewan on the government aircraft needs to get down on the ground and get into their government cars and go up and down the highways of Saskatchewan. And if the cabinet ministers would do that, the Minister of Highways might have some support on that side of the House to do something about repairing Saskatchewan highways.

So what does the privatization of highways mean? The privatization of highways has meant over 400 jobs lost, it

has meant \$40 million of Saskatchewan assets have gone to people outside of our province, and it certainly has meant a significant deterioration of our province's highway system.

Now I'd like to talk about SED Systems in Saskatoon . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I will talk about SED Systems. I see I've got a bit of a rise from the minister responsible for the science and technology community.

An Hon. Member: — That's the minister of slot machines.

Ms. Atkinson: — My colleague says this is the minister in charge of slot machines.

Now SED Systems of Saskatoon was established as a private company by the University of Saskatchewan in 1972, and it emerged from the university's high-tech research and development work and grew out of a space engineering division of the university's Institute of Space and Atmospheric Studies. In 1987 SED was owned by the university, by the province, by the provincial government, or by the people of Saskatchewan and by its employees, and there were also some private shareholders involved.

SED Systems in 1987 employed 370 people in Saskatoon, the city I represent, and the city the minister of high science or technology represents. Now in January of 1987, the government, the PC government, allowed SED to be sold off to Fleet Aerospace of Ontario. That's what this government allowed. And the minister in charge of economic development defended the deal by saying that this government would ensure that that company stayed in Saskatchewan and that the 350 people working in Saskatoon would stay employed and that the management of the company would still be in Saskatoon.

Now this government sold \$2 million in SED shares to Fleet in exchange for Fleet's shares worth only about \$1.3 million. By early 1988 this deal had fallen apart. Fleet was forced to lay off . . . or Fleet forced SED Systems to lay off 70 workers and they threatened to fire more staff if the Government of Saskatchewan didn't meet the demand of Fleet Aerospace of Ontario.

Now the minister opposite says that's not true. Well let's just talk about that. Here is what we have quoted by the chairman, George Dragone, in a *Star-Phoenix* article, February 24, 1988. And this is what the chairman of Fleet Aerospace of Ontario said:

The message to the government is, we'd better get some financial help, and some help quick. If we don't have help, we'll cut it right back again and again, and we may even have to move it out of here.

Now what happened? In March 1988 SED Systems lays off more workers, and they replace SED's manager by an Ontario Fleet Aerospace employee. Here's a manager that was from Saskatchewan.

You know, this government talks about educating our children for the 21st century. We have had many, many, many heads of publicly owned corporations who were

born and raised and educated in our province of Saskatchewan, and what does this government do? Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation — Roy Lloyd was the president of that corporation. Roy Lloyd's fired and they bring in some guy from Alberta.

Then we have the Saskatchewan potash corporation — Saskatchewan potash corporation. What do they do there? They have David Dombowsky, a Saskatchewan born and raised man who gets his education at the University of Saskatchewan, he's running the largest potash corporation in the world, and what do these guys do? They bring in a guy from the United States. That's what these guys do.

An Hon. Member: — Wrong.

Ms. Atkinson: — And he says wrong. I'm absolutely right — absolutely right. There is no one who's the head of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation that is Saskatchewan born and raised, no one whatsoever.

Now then, what happens to SED Systems? SED says the PC Government . . . pardon me, the PC government then gives in to Fleet's latest demand. The PC government agrees to buy the building that SED is located in for 10 . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I repeat once more that constant interruption of the speaker is not good form in the House by anybody, and I ask for the hon. member to refrain from doing so.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much. So then the government agrees to purchase the new building that Fleet Aerospace or SED's in, for \$10 million in order to give SED and Fleet some operating cash, and SEDCO agrees to lease the building back to SED for 20 years. And the terms of that lease have never been released to the public to this day.

Now from the onset, I would say that the PC government opposite has mismanaged the privatization of SED Systems. This is a company that 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.

PC privatization of this company has meant the following. Over 70 workers are gone; the province's \$2 million investment in SED Systems, if it was sold now, would only be worth \$600,000; and ownership of this company has been transferred, not to Saskatchewan people, not to Saskatchewan taxpayers, but to an Ontario company that then uses public threats to get more financial assistance from the Government of Saskatchewan. That's what privatization has meant for SED.

Now I want to talk about Saskatchewan Minerals. Saskatchewan Minerals was a profitable, publicly owned sodium sulphate producer that was developed in the mid-1940s. And this company, since 1946, made a profit every single, solitary year except one, and that was in 1972.

Now in late March 1988, the minister of privatization announces that Sask Minerals has been sold. The sodium sulphate operations at Chaplin and Fox Valley are sold to a subsidiary of Dickenson Mines of Ontario, Kam-Kotia, for \$12.5 million. The peat moss operation of Sask Minerals is sold to Premier Cdn of Quebec for 3.4 million. Now the announced sale price was \$15.9 million. That \$15.9 million is less than Saskatchewan Minerals' profits from just the last six years. It's less than that.

Now on December 8, 1987, Premier Cdn enterprises issued a public share offering prospectus seeking to raise funds in Quebec, from investors in Quebec, in the amount of \$3.8 million. But the PC privatization of the peat moss plant at Carrot River only brought in a final price of \$3.4 million.

Now in early 1989 another Ontario company, Corona corporation, launched a take-over bid of Dickenson, including the sodium sulphate operations here in Saskatchewan. Now in this example of PC privatization, or privatization PC style, we see that there was no advance consultation with the working people at Sask Minerals, no advance consultation with the community at Chaplin and Fox Valley and Carrot River. And the Minister of Education says it's not true, but my colleague, the member from Moose Jaw South and myself happened to be out at Chaplin when the minister of privatization went to consult with the people after the deal was done. Consultation PC style means you don't consult for months beforehand and you develop a process; you don't do that — you go in afterwards and you tell the people what you're going to do.

Now here's what else happened with this great little deal of the members opposite. There was no public tendering. No one in our province had the opportunity to buy Sask Minerals. The workers didn't have the opportunity to buy Sask Minerals. There was absolutely no public tendering of the assets for sale and the assets were sold in a sweetheart deal to non-Saskatchewan corporations. That's what privatization has meant.

Now let's talk about the parks system. Here's another PC privatization. Since 1986 the government has been privatizing Saskatchewan parks. The most recent example that I'm aware of is the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park. This government has built private hotels in Cypress Hills, Moose Mountain and in Duck Mountain parks. They had a little privatization deal going in the North Battleford park, but it seems to have fallen apart, with their friend Tim Ryan, who's a great party . . . Conservative, and great party supporter.

Now in this case, what's happened in each case, privatization has meant the same developer gets control of all rental cabins and condominium units. Now privatization in our parks has meant increased cost to the public. For example, at Duck Mountain the private developer increased condominium rents by 25 per cent. When Mt. Blackstrap's ski operation was privatized, the price of a season ticket for a family increased by 100 per cent; and after the Moose Mountain Park golf course was privatized, seasonal green fees increased 40 per cent.

Now the new privatized Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park

meant sharp increases in entry fees in 1988, and we still don't know what's going to happen in 1989. Now the deal permits further increases in 1989 and in the future, and I'll give you an example. An adult in 1987 was able to enter the park for \$2. In 1988 that increased to \$3.75, and in 1992 it looks as though it will increase to \$4.75, for an increase of 27 per cent.

A student wanting to go to the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park in 1987 paid \$1.50. In 1988 when it was privatized, they paid \$2.50. That's a 67 per cent increase on the children of our province. And then under privatization in 1992, students will pay \$3.50.

Let's talk about pre-schoolers, little kids, little kids under the age of five. In 1987 when this park was publicly owned, little kids could get into that park free. They could go and see the animals for free. Their parents didn't have to come up with the money. Now in 1988 they'll pay a buck. That's what they paid last summer. That is a significant increase. And in 1992 those parents of pre-school children will pay \$2 — another significant increase. For little children — eight-month-olds, two-year-olds, three-year-olds — they will pay \$2 to go and see the animals at the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park.

(1615)

I think that's unbelievable, and it's not what I call a fair and equitable fee increase. But that's what PC privatization has meant to parks and the young people and the young families and the families that go and enjoy our parks.

Now privatization has not only meant higher costs charged by the private corporations in our parks. It's also meant higher costs charged by the PC government for the public services it still provides. For instance, park entry fees have gone up over 30 per cent, camping fees over 80 per cent, and charges for swimming lessons for young kids has increased by 150 per cent. That's what PC privatization has meant.

Now this Bill, Mr. Speaker, gives this government the opportunity to do whatever it wants, whenever it wants, however it wants. This Bill means that privatization deals will continue in our province in secret. They will be secret deals done behind closed doors and not in the open. That's what this Bill is all about, Mr. Speaker.

Now the minister and the government will try to explain away this privatization Bill by pretending it's a little innocent Bill and it really doesn't have much to do with privatization. But no one can believe this government any more. We can't believe them because their word is not their word.

They somehow pretend that this Bill really won't mean anything, that PC privatization deals will have to come before the legislature. But we know that that hasn't been the case in the past. They didn't bring the Sask Mineral deal before the legislature. They didn't bring the SaskCOMP deal before the legislature. They didn't bring forward the privatization of the school-based children's dental plan before the legislature for public debate. They didn't bring forward a Bill to privatize SaskTel, and many,

many assets of SaskTel have already been privatized.

When they privatized parks, they didn't bring that before the legislature. When they privatized the highways, they didn't bring that before the legislature. They haven't brought many privatization Bills into this House for public debate.

This government likes to do deals down at the Diplomat and the Ramada Renaissance in closed little cubby-holes with their big-business friends and their political cronies. But they have no mandate to sell off Saskatchewan assets; they have no mandate whatsoever.

Governments in this province and in this country own absolutely nothing; they own nothing. The people of Saskatchewan and Canada own the assets. Governments are elected every three or four or five years to manage those assets, to manage the taxpayers' dollars, and this government's not doing a very good job at that.

Taxes have gone up steadfastly since this government came to office in 1982. Taxes go up and the deficit goes up and services go down, and working people in this province have a smaller amount of money in order to provide an education for their children, to provide a house for their family, to take a little vacation once in a while into our parks, because this government keeps taking more and more and more away from them.

Now the Minister of Finance said that his budget was a hit with Saskatchewan people. Well it was not; it was not. I had the opportunity to meet with literally dozens and dozens of constituents and people out and about Saskatchewan since this government brought in its budget. Saskatchewan people are feeling taxed to death, taxed to death. And this government will say, well we only had tax increases on the sin taxes or the sin things, like cigarettes and alcohol and lottery tickets. But there are a lot of people in this province that drink alcohol. There are a lot of people in this province that smoke. There are a lot of people in this province that buy lottery tickets and go to bingo, and they're not necessarily the poor; they're middle income people.

And those middle income people see their Saskatchewan Power Corporation rates going up when SaskPower had \$100 million profit last year. They see their SaskTel rates going up, and SaskTel had a profit. They see their car insurance rates just went up March 1 — 7 per cent; and if you drive an old car — 10 per cent. They see their mortgages going up, and this government says absolutely nothing about rising interest rates, nothing at all.

They see their wages being cut back and this government introducing legislation that will make it more difficult for working men and women in this province to make a living. They see this government privatizing publicly owned assets, and they see job lay-offs. They see their young children not being able to get into university or Kelsey institute because this government has cut funding to post-secondary educational institutions, and those institutions have been forced to put on enrolment quotas. They see grade 12 students who graduated last year, going back to high school to get their marks up because you have to have a 78 or 79 to get into university.

And they wonder what is this government doing with their money. They see them selling off these assets, and some people think you're actually getting money for these assets, but you're not. They see tax increases. They see the deficit going up. They see their ability to make a living in this province going down. And so what happens?

Men and women of our province are thinking about leaving Saskatchewan because they don't think there's a future here. That's what the men and women are doing. In February of '89, 6,300 people left Saskatchewan. On Saturday night I spoke to a family, he's a surgeon at a hospital in Saskatoon and they're leaving Saskatchewan. And you hear social workers leaving Saskatchewan and young people leaving Saskatchewan and teachers leaving Saskatchewan and business men and women leaving Saskatchewan because they don't think they have a future here. They don't think they have a future here.

Now it seems to me that whatever you people are doing is not working. We don't have economic development in our province. You're not lowering the deficit. People are paying taxes for a depleting number of services. Services just aren't there any more.

They see you privatizing everything. They think that you people are absolutely out of control. They think you're out of control, and this Bill is indicative of a government that has gone too far. This Bill is indicative of a government that wants to do whatever it wants, whenever it wants, however it wants. And the people of our province know that you people are anti-democratic, that you don't care about them, that you've given up on them. And so your job now is to simply stay in power for as long as you can so you can wine and dine at the Diplomat.

Well, members opposite, it's no longer working. The people of our province have caught on to you. And after the little exercise that the minister of privatization went through on the weekend in Swift Current, people don't want your propaganda in our school systems. People don't want PC Party propaganda in schools. They know what you're about, that you're about deficits and tax increases and taking money away from them. People regularly comment that they now have to work 30 or 40 per cent of the year just to pay taxes to the government, a PC government in Ottawa and a PC government in Saskatchewan. And they know that those governments are heartless. They have no compassion. They have no passion and no care.

The people are on to you, and we're on to you. And I can assure the people of Saskatchewan that my colleagues and I are not prepared to allow you people to deliver the people's assets to your corporate friends and your cronies; that we will be opposing privatization with vigour; that we know that there is a new vision of Saskatchewan; that there's a new day coming; that there's a new Jerusalem in this province. There's a new Jerusalem coming in this province under the leadership of the next leader and the next premier of Saskatchewan, the Leader of the New Democratic Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — We have 26 members of the legislature that have integrity on the New Democratic Party's side, and there are literally dozens and dozens and dozens of Saskatchewan people who are coming forward to offer themselves as candidates for the New Democratic Party in the next provincial election.

We welcome that election. We have a leader; we are involved in a policy formation in our province and within our party. We will have a bright new future for Saskatchewan people under a vigorous leader who has integrity and knows how to tell the truth. We will have future, forward-looking policies that will meet the real needs of Saskatchewan people. We will ensure that there is real economic development for all of us in this province. We will ensure that the family farm can continue to exist, that small town Saskatchewan will have a future and have hope. We will ensure that farm families and urban families have access to services that allow them to have a future. We will ensure that the working men and women of our province aren't taxed to death. We will ensure that the working men and women of our province have jobs and that the young people of our province have jobs. We will make sure that our government is fair and compassionate and cares about people.

I look forward to the day that you people have the jam to call the next provincial election because we'll be there with our leader and with our policy, and we will win the next government of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to rise and speak to this debate and also speak to the people of Saskatchewan about an initiative our government is bringing to them, an initiative, Mr. Speaker, that offers enormous benefits to everyone in this province — anyone who would like to become involved with the government and with the people in providing service to individuals, whether they are young or old or whoever; who would like to become involved in the governing and the business of providing the services to the people of our fair province.

Mr. Speaker, what we're addressing and speaking about today is public participation. The very act, Mr. Speaker, of bringing public participation to the province demonstrates the forward-looking attitude that people have come to expect from this Progressive Conservative government, and the companies and resources owned by Saskatchewan men and women will continue to generate tax revenues and contribute to the provincial treasury.

Mr. Speaker, each and every one of us involved in this Assembly and any individual involved in business, whether they be on the farm or a small-business person, realizes that the province continues to operate because, as we create initiative, as our economy continues to move, as people bring in money and make money, they also pay taxes, and it's the taxes of individuals that go towards creating the economy and the movement of services that the people of this province have come to expect.

Mr. Speaker, by transferring ownership of Crown corporations from the government to the people of Saskatchewan, public participation will expand our economic growth, develop our resources, create new jobs, and encourage new investment in Saskatchewan.

Since 1982, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan has been involved in a variety of public participation initiatives, and we must also remind the people of this province that in 1982 even members on the opposite side of the House, a number of leaders of that government of that day, sat down and discussed forms of public participation within the Crown corporations of that day.

Some early examples of public participation include contracting highway construction and maintenance services, public bond and share offerings in Saskoil, provincial park leasing agreements, and the sale of PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company). Mr. Speaker, I'm going to detail these initiatives more extensively later because the story they tell is very important as we enter and continue in this debate.

But to continue on in this vein, Mr. Speaker, in January of 1988 this government created the Department of Public Participation to provide a greater focus on the program by encouraging Saskatchewan people to play a larger role in the growth and the development of their province.

Through the development of some government assets and the formation of new Saskatchewan companies, public participation has created new jobs and attracted new investment and revenue dollars into this province. The best example of this, Mr. Speaker, is the former Crown-owned, money-losing company called PAPCO. That cost, to the people of this province, when the company was in . . . when PAPCO was in operation, was \$90,000 a day to operate. Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers of this province were putting out \$90,000 a day just to keep a company in existence.

(1630)

And when PAPCO was sold to Weyerhaeuser Canada in 1986, Mr. Speaker, a transformation began. Run by private industry, Mr. Speaker, Weyerhaeuser is now responsible for 1,000 jobs in Saskatchewan. About 100 people run a saw mill in Big River, another 100 at a chemical plant in Saskatoon, and the rest working out of its pulp and paper mills in Prince Albert.

And earlier on, as we were discussing the Speech from the Throne, the Deputy Speaker gave us a rousing speech on what Weyerhaeuser meant in his part of the province and how it was providing jobs to people in his area; just pointed out to us the fact that the sale of PAPCO was a worthwhile investment, not only to the people in north-western Saskatchewan but to all the people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, when Weyerhaeuser constructed a \$250 million world-class paper mill, over 700 construction jobs were created, and 169 permanent positions are now a reality. And just recently, Mr. Speaker, Weyerhaeuser has announced a \$20.8 million expansion in their Prince

Albert pulp mill. This initiative is expected to create 34 permanent jobs and about 100 man-years of employment in the construction phase.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to add that they have tied this expansion directly to the free trade agreement, which was opposed as vehemently by the members opposite as was the sale of PAPCO.

Mr. Speaker, with figures such as these, I'm not sure why the members would take such a negative outlook regarding public participation. I believe any time any corporation and or any individual is willing to put some money out to create jobs and create employment that is good, not only for all the people, but we have been hearing over the past number of days there have been many questions regarding jobs and regarding job employment.

And I would point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that the directive of this government and the intention is to create more jobs, more employment, so that our young people can continue to remain. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, down the road we will see more people coming back to Saskatchewan because of the job creation, because of the availability of jobs within this province.

Mr. Speaker, the monthly incomes of the paper mill employees are injecting approximately \$500,000 directly into the city of Prince Albert. And in April of 1988, Weyerhaeuser presented a cheque to the Government of Saskatchewan for 30.5 million as the first instalment on the total profits of \$63.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, other initiatives in public participation were seen when WESTBRIDGE Computer Corporation became a fine example of how effective the private industry can be in providing a service. Since forming, WESTBRIDGE has earned \$6 million in out-of-province contracts, and the company's quick rate of growth has already created 50 new employment opportunities — 50 new jobs that were not available prior to the formation of WESTBRIDGE.

And, Mr. Speaker, these are permanent jobs, jobs that people can continue to look forward to and feel this job security that most every individual would like to have. And continued expansion promises 200 additional jobs within this industry.

Saskoil, Mr. Speaker, another example of planned gas development activities resulting from the purchase of and utilize Saskatchewan Power natural gas reserves, will create new economic activity. Mr. Speaker, with 100 new wells to be drilled and the potential for over 600, there are 1,000 jobs projected to be created in the Saskoil sector and in the oil and gas sector of SaskEnergy.

Mr. Speaker, the introduction of TeleBonds helped raise \$103 million in new capital for the telephone company to expand its digital technology and improve individual line service to rural customers. I believe, Mr. Speaker, as I've been talking to individuals around my constituency, a number of whom bought some TeleBonds, each and every one of them, Mr. Speaker, has indicated that they thought it was a good idea to raise the money from within

the province versus borrowing money outside of the province and, specifically, going to New York and paying large interest and sending it outside of the province, rather than investing right here at home.

And I find many of my constituents are more than happy to be involved and to be able to invest some of their savings. And we find, Mr. Speaker, I believe that Saskatchewan has one of the highest savings per capita of anywhere in the world.

Mr. Speaker, the sale of Saskatchewan Minerals corporation to two companies brought new marketing and technological expertise into the province. Kam-Kotia Mines Ltd., one of the companies, has a profit-sharing plan that resulted in over 100,000 being given back to their employees at Chaplin and Fox Valley.

The sale of the Meadow Lake Sawmill to the employees and 10 local Indian bands has attracted 250 millions of dollars of new investment to this area of the province.

Two new companies, a chopstick factory and a pulp mill, have decided to locate and invest in this area, and there are more than 400 jobs projected to develop because of this sale to the employees and these native Indian bands.

Mr. Speaker, the new employee and native owners have created a new spirit of enterprise and attracted new economic activity to the area. And I know that the native owners are more than happy to be involved and to be looking at creating employment in their sector so that they can create an added avenue by which the native people of this province can look forward to developing industry in which they can be a part of, as well.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is what public participation is all about. Increased participation and the delivery of public services is being achieved through new forms of delivery, involving contracting services from the private sector, government employees, community groups, and third parties.

In 1983, the Saskatchewan Department of Highways and Transportation began contracting much of their highway construction and maintenance operations out. Today 97 per cent of the construction work done on the highways is contracted to the private sector.

Data entry services within the Department of Finance have been contracted to a private company, COMPUSHARE of Regina. Mr. Speaker, COMPUSHARE'S technological advantages and proven marketing expertise ensures quality service delivery and cost efficiencies.

Increased participation has occurred within the provincial government's auditing services. Previously conducted by the Provincial Auditor, private auditing firms now deliver these services with great success, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these services are cost benefit and service improvements . . . there are cost benefit and service improvements through public participation.

In December of 1988, Mr. Speaker, requests for proposals were advertised for the sale of three government-owned

northern farms. To encourage local participation, northern communities have been invited to bid on these farms. Historically, the provincial government farms have lost almost \$1 million annually. Mr. Speaker, I believe that as the northern communities get involved and look at developing these northern farms, they can provide a great service, not only in their communities but to the areas in which they serve. And I believe public participation will be very beneficial in creating a more economic climate for those northern farmers to work in.

Mr. Speaker, the government-owned White Track ski hill was recently reopened through the efforts of a local volunteer ski club. The facility was closed in 1986 and lost 104,000 in its last year of operation. Last fall the Moose Jaw Alpine Ski Club worked with the Department of Public Participation to create a viable business proposal allowing for the club to reopen the facility using local volunteer labour. And, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that local volunteer labour.

Many times, Mr. Speaker, we may look at government as the means of realizing a dream or having high expectations of what government can do for us, but there are also times when volunteer help can be very beneficial in providing services to our communities. And as we see the local volunteer help in working to open the ski slope at Moose Jaw, I'm sure that everyone involved has taken great pride in realizing that they have provided a service and reopened a recreation facility that so many people were enjoying, had enjoyed over the years, and were able to enjoy again this year; not only provided economic involvement within the community, but it also provided an area of recreation that . . . from the youngest to the oldest, people could enjoy. People didn't have to drive for miles out of Moose Jaw to go to ski; they just had to drive to their own local ski slope and enjoy a service that they had had for a number of years. Mr. Speaker, the hill is now operating successfully, and an important community service has been preserved for the people of Moose Jaw and for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, contracting highway ditch mowing services to local farmers, businesses and communities has provided them with new opportunities to supplement their incomes. In fact, I've had many people approach me about the possibility of bidding on some of these tenders. And it is an indication to me that there are many individuals who are willing to get involved in providing a service, not only to their community but to their province. There are many people in Saskatchewan who would like to become involved in providing services and, in fact, in some cases giving of themselves to build their communities and build their province. The contracting out of the ditch mowing has resulted in a 55 per cent cost saving from the contracting out of these services.

Contracting the function of the Provincial Inquiry Centre resulted in one-stop convenience for provincial and federal government inquiries. Contracting of the service, Mr. Speaker, I am told will save \$118,000 per year. And, Mr. Speaker, not only was the service contracted out but all employees were offered continued employment with the government. There wasn't a loss of jobs; everyone was given the advantage of working within government

or working within the company that was formed.

The Department of Education has also been practising some public participation initiatives. Let me tell you about one. A Saskatchewan education employee submitted the winning proposal to contract tape duplication and film loan services for the provincial government. The employee's proposal was chosen over three other bids received from private companies, based upon projected cost efficiencies, service improvements, and new economic development.

Mr. Speaker, better technology and marketing expertise for this service exists in the private sector, and I believe, as we look at the private sector, as we look at personal initiative, there is possibly just a little bit more pride or greater pride exhibited by individuals when they feel they have a part of something, versus just working for someone, when they've got an investment that they want to see enhance and go ahead.

By contracting these services, the government will be enabled to improve service delivery and avoid purchasing costly equipment. The new employee owner plans to expand his company as a private contractor to include some video post-production work. What were the cost savings of this, Mr. Speaker? They are projected to be in the neighbourhood of \$124,000.

Mr. Speaker, the affected Saskatchewan education employees have been fully protected. All 15 of the employees were offered positions with the new company and alternative employment within the department.

Let me give you another example of public participation. A welder with the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation has started his own business to deliver welding services to the government as a private contractor. As a private contractor the former SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) employee will be able to expand his earnings through private sector contracts and save the government 35 per cent of their former cost. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a great saving to the people of this province.

(1645)

Mr. Speaker, since 1983 public participation in Saskatchewan's park system has encouraged economic diversification across the province. New business, investment, and volunteer delivery has improved and created many new facilities for residents and tourists to enjoy. Some of these, Mr. Speaker, include a new marina at Rowan's Ravine, and in my area of the province at Moose Mountain Provincial Park we have a new club golf house. And just recently, in fact, just a little over a year ago, we opened a new inn. The new inn is providing a service which was never there before.

Mr. Speaker, Kenosee Park is a beautiful park. A major problem we have is the water in the water level within the lake. But aside from that, Mr. Speaker, we have a golf course which is next to none within this province. In the winter-time there is cross-country skiing and there is fishing off the lake. There's a large population of deer and moose and elk within the park, and many people enjoy

coming to this park. In fact, it is the . . . last year and over the past number of years it has been the most utilized of any of the parks within this province.

And just recently, as well, there's a large water slide developed in the area which was utilized to its fullest last year. In fact the developers were more than pleased with the use of that water slide.

And so the creation and the building of this new inn has not only provided employment within the park, but has provided a service in meeting the needs of individuals as they come to the park — a place where they can stay; a place where they can relax and rest; a place where they can sit down and enjoy a bite with their friends and neighbours. And, Mr. Speaker, when I see that, I just see a lot of the benefits of public participation.

And I also want to remind you that that inn was created and developed by six young entrepreneurs. They weren't well-to-do individuals. In fact five of the six are basically just starting out, but they wanted to provide a service. They could see that a lot of their . . . the young people that they had grown up were looking for a place to gather, were looking for something to do. And they wanted to give them an opportunity to have a place to stop when they came to the park, other than just parking on the parking lot. They wanted to provide a service. And I'm more than happy to be able to say that it is doing very well. And in fact I was talking to some of the owners recently, and they were saying it's working beyond their expectations.

We also realize, Mr. Speaker, that interest rates are a thing that concern individuals, and I believe in the near future you will see us discussing interest rates as well. But what I would like to point out is that public participation in this case is working, and working very well.

We also have a new golf clubhouse at Valley Centre recreation site. And as I'd mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, the White Track ski hill reopened under volunteers.

Mr. Speaker, for as long as I could list public participation initiatives in this provinces, I could list positive economic benefits as well. These new forms of service delivery are encouraging more efficient use of our resources, new jobs are being created, and existing jobs are being protected.

Mr. Speaker, people all over the province have been consulted about our public participation initiatives. In 1988, 15 public consultation meetings were held throughout the province with over 2,500 Saskatchewan people being involved. And I would like to speak just for a minute about a meeting I attended in Whitewood. In fact, it was the very first public participation meeting that was conducted in this forum, conducted in the Whitewood Inn. And, Mr. Speaker, we had over 150 people came out for that meeting, the very first one of its kind.

And what was interesting, Mr. Speaker, was after a series of meetings and just sitting down and discussing some of the alternatives and what could be done, and how we could reach out and help people through public participation, what was interesting, Mr. Speaker, were some of the comments coming from the delegates who

had taken the time to come and attend this meeting. And, Mr. Speaker, I might add that the comments were coming not just from individuals who profess to be Conservatives, or profess to be Liberals, but even from individuals who profess to be strong New Democrats. They could see there was a place for public participation; there was a place where they could be involved in the development of the economic activity in this province, and they wanted to have a part of it.

And, Mr. Speaker, in 1989 meetings are presently under way to give more people within the province an opportunity to speak out and to voice their opinions, to voice their views. I believe the minister responsible for public participation had a meeting today, meeting with a group of people.

And I know many of my colleagues, as they have been meeting with their constituents and discussing public participation throughout the province have found that there are many ideas. People all over this province have ideas of how we can make this place a better province, a better place to live. And I believe that is the intent of our government, is to create an environment where people from all walks of life can continue to come and be proud to live in the province of Saskatchewan.

And we find too, Mr. Speaker, that people are saying that they like our ideas. Not only do they like the ideas that we're presenting but they're also giving us some very positive and affirmative ideas that we can put to use as well, and that I'm sure the member from Indian Head-Wolseley has been more than happy to hear of and to receive some of the ideas and proposals that have come forward. The people of this province are giving us many of their own ideas and initiatives.

Saskatchewan people want to see more efficient forms of public service delivery that will stimulate new investment and create new jobs. Saskatchewan people want to put their savings to work inside the province by purchasing bonds and Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people want to invest in the ownership of government assets by purchasing shares. Mr. Speaker, if they didn't, we wouldn't have the overwhelming success of the Sask TeleBonds and SaskPower bonds.

Mr. Speaker, if Saskatchewan people didn't believe in those initiatives, they wouldn't have invested in them. But the fact is they have, and they have invested in very enthusiastically. They have been more than happy to get involved and to put their money to work here in the province of Saskatchewan. And most importantly, Saskatchewan people want more opportunities to invest and save in the province, to facilitate our own economic development. Mr. Speaker, this government is going to give the people of Saskatchewan many of the initiatives that they would desire to see, many of the opportunities that they are asking of us.

Mr. Speaker, we also didn't just limit our consultation process to public meetings, but the Minister of Public Participation has also gone to the very people who would be affected by the process of public participation. In the past year we've had over 20 informational seminars with over 400 government employees from all parts of the

province being involved. Government employees are providing input into how public participation can build a stronger province, a stronger Saskatchewan, and, Mr. Speaker, employees want to have a greater control over improving public service delivery. They want to protect the quality of life here in Saskatchewan. They also want their rights and benefits protected, and they want to learn more about the many opportunities public participation can provide, not only for themselves but for their children and the children of the next generation. And we are doing our best to meet those requests, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the most amazing thing about public participation is that it is not an ideological idea as the members opposite would have you believe. In fact they have said many times that we are blinded by our right-wing ideology. I'd like to remind you, the members opposite, that public participation is being practised by governments all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, it's being practised by governments with a socialistic ideology. It's being practised in communist countries in the world. Public participation is nothing new. We are just, as a province, just getting involved in an activity that has been going on for many years.

Let me speak about a few places where public participation has been going on for a number of years. New Zealand has engaged in moving government-owned enterprises to the public, and they are a Labour government, Mr. Speaker. Australia is also a Labour government, and they are moving away from state ownership.

I would just like to let you know, Mr. Speaker, that a couple of my constituents, neighbours of ours, spent a month in Australia and New Zealand last fall. And when I was talking with them, or I saw them at a local bonspiel back in January, I asked them how their trip was and how they enjoyed it. And they were just telling me how beautiful it was in New Zealand. One thing that really amazed them was their ability to harness water and to turn a river in New Zealand, one river, and set up five power projects on that river. And you ask, well how can that be done? They said, it's very simple, because they've got such high elevations of land, they can start on a peak at a high elevation, set up one power project; run the water through that power plant, shoot it down the mountain; half-way down the mountain pick up another power project, and then down, pick up the third one — he said it was just amazing to see the development of power within that country.

And then what were they doing? They were selling it, they were selling it and moving it outside of the country. They were in Australia, and in fact as they drove around the country of Australia and saw the government's involvement in public participation in turning over government ownership to the private sector, his comment to me was that if we were in Australia as a Conservative government, we would be left-wing beside that Labour government in Australia.

He felt that, considering what he thought their ideology was, we were moving rather slowly, Mr. Speaker. He was quite impressed with what the Australians and the New

Zealanders were doing.

Mr. Speaker, we have countries like Finland, Sweden, Portugal, Spain, and Tanzania, all socialist governments, and they're all moving the control away from government and back to the hands of the people. I believe that, as a party, this party has said all along that we want to be the servant, not the master, and through public participation I believe, Mr. Speaker, we are indeed working towards that goal.

Let's move to some other countries: Australia . . . Austria, pardon me . . . Jamaica, Holland, Britain, Denmark, Turkey, Nigeria, Togo, Grenada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Belize, and Honduras — are all selling government-owned corporations to their people and other investors. And, Mr. Speaker, if this wasn't a good thing, would they be able to sell off government ownership? If it wasn't a good thing, no one would get involved. But, Mr. Speaker, it obviously points out that public participation is a good thing and it is doing well, and it will do well not only in other countries of the world but even here in this province.

Let's look at China and the Soviet Union. What are they doing? Mr. Speaker, I am told that in China, and I've got . . . Let me back up a little bit. Let me just speak about the background, the ancestry I come from, the Hungarian people. I have relatives that just returned to Hungary recently, and they were saying that in Hungary the little garden plots that have been turned over to the people, the people are producing more in those little garden plots than they are in the big state farms. And in fact Hungary has become a very aggressive, progressive country. If we were all socialists, Hungary would be considered a democracy.

Mr. Speaker, the Soviet Union also began selling her state-owned farms before Saskatchewan did, and yet the members opposite have the audacity to say that we are blinded by our ideology.

Mr. Speaker, I have listed 24 countries whose political beliefs come from every part of the political spectrum, and I cannot see the correlation that the members opposite are trying to make between public participation and political ideology. Mr. Speaker, their entire attitude on public participation is a lesson in hypocrisy.

And, Mr. Speaker, in 1982 . . .

An Hon. Member: — Hold it, we're adjourning debate.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I believe I have one minute. I would just like to remind the Speaker that I would like to get into some of the arguments that the New Democratic government was working on in 1982, but being near 5 o'clock, Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — If the hon. member doesn't mind, would he just move a motion adjourning debate. Would you do that? Okay.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.