

April 11, 1989

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you this afternoon, and to members of the Assembly, 23 residents in the Speaker's gallery who are visiting us from the constituency of Regina North West.

Mr. Speaker, they are people who have lived in the Lakewood Manor Housing Corporation, which is located on the corner of Rochdale and Devonshire, and I will be meeting with them afterwards, Mr. Speaker, for pictures and to discuss issues of the day.

The president of the association is Andy Medwid, who is there, and the organizers of the tour are Blanche Green and Myrtle Browne . . . or Sally Browne, I think it is. And I'd like to take this opportunity to ask my colleagues to join with me in welcoming them to the Assembly, and I hope that you enjoy your tour here today. Thank you.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Licence for Rafferty-Alameda Project

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for the Souris Basin Development Authority, and it deals with the very heart of the credibility of this government.

Mr. Minister, yesterday the Federal Court of Canada ruled that the federal government had improperly issued a licence for the Rafferty dam project, and it quashed that licence.

This ruling confirms what many in the public have been saying for months now, and that is that the environment review process was ignored for political reasons.

My question, Mr. Minister, to you is this: in light of yesterday's ruling by the federal court of Canada, will you order an immediate halt to construction of the Rafferty-Alameda project to protect the millions of dollars of public money that are being wasted and are at risk here now?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that at all times Saskatchewan has been in full compliance and has since June 17 been building a dam under licence issued June 17, 1988.

Now there are people, Mr. Speaker, that have said, we don't believe the federal government acted within their authority. And so those people — specifically, Mr. Speaker, the wildlife federation of Canada — challenged the federal Minister of Environment in the federal court.

The federal court ruled that indeed the federal minister had acted beyond his authority.

Now there are people today, Mr. Speaker, that are taking great delight in that, some of them for good and valid reasons, Mr. Speaker, some of them for good and valid reasons. But, Mr. Speaker, members opposite should be ashamed of themselves. They have no more respect for the environment, in that particular project, than they have for a space project, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker . . .

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — New question. Yes, the federal government acted beyond this authority. It acted beyond . . . Is my light on, Mr. Speaker?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I repeat again, in my new question — yes, the federal government acted beyond its authority. The federal court of Canada has said that, and it acted beyond its authority with the agreement and the urging of the Premier and the minister opposite of who I am asking the question today. That's unacceptable, Mr. Minister. I'm not surprised by your answer. I'm disappointed because you are indicating by your evading of the question that you're prepared to continue breaking the laws of this country in order to serve your political needs.

So I ask you, Mr. Minister, is it your position that a federal licence is not required for this project, or are you saying that you're going to ignore the requirement that is inherent in that law and proceed anyway? Or will you answer my first question and say to this House today that you're going to stop construction of that project immediately?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, this government believes in that project. This government believes in the viability of that project. This government believes that protection against drought can and must be obtained through water management in the Souris River. This government, Mr. Speaker, also believes in obeying the law . . .

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — And I will tell the House right now, Mr. Speaker, that as it relates the Rafferty-Shand projects, there will be a meeting at 7 o'clock this evening in the Elks hall in Estevan for the purposes, Mr. Speaker, of talking to the workers and their families about the impact of this project . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order, order. The minister can't be heard if he's being interrupted. He's in the midst of a question, and I think we should allow him to answer the question.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting in the Elks hall in Estevan at 7 o'clock this evening, at which time, Mr. Speaker, I will explain to the employees and their families, who have the right to know

first, Mr. Speaker, as to the impact that this ruling will have on them and their families and their future. And, Mr. Speaker, I intend to be there to deliver the message, Mr. Speaker, that those people . . .

What would they have us do, Mr. Speaker? What would they have us do? Do they want to blow Shand away? What do they want — the lights to go out, nuclear power, dam the Churchill River, wheat land? Eastend, if the member wants . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well you're no longer representing that constituency; they threw you out of there. What would they have us do, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question. I say to the minister, if he and his Premier had had their house in order, this situation would not face the people of Saskatchewan today.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — And we're only here today because of the waste and the mismanagement and the arrogance of that government opposite.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, my new question to the minister involves again the federal review process. And in view of the fact that that process may find that those dams cannot go ahead, either in part or at all, I then ask the minister: doesn't he agree that the responsible thing to do would be to halt the project until either the appeal of this thing is carried through and a judgement is made, if there is an appeal, or there is a federal impact study completed so that the public money is protected here. Don't you agree, Mr. Minister, that that's the responsible thing to do?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, all options will be studied and explored. As it relates . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Why didn't you do that before you started?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Now chirping from his seat, Mr. Speaker, the former member from Shaunavon, who got blown out of that seat because people had no respect for him, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, it should be remembered, and I know that members opposite don't want to hear this, Mr. Speaker, because they're a little sensitive. They're a little sensitive. They want the project blown away, Mr. Speaker. They want that project stopped. They are in no way, shape, or form interested in environmental impact or in any way, shape, or form. We have complied in every respect, Mr. Speaker. We have had a licence every step of the way, Mr. Speaker, and we have broken no law, nor will we.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, this evening in Estevan the people who have the right to know first as to the impact of this decision on those projects are the workers and the families on those projects. Now members opposite may not care about them, but we do, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — New question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. My final question to the minister. Mr. Minister, this project was a political pork-barrel project. It's been flawed and it's been indefensible from its very beginning. Because if it was, Mr. Minister, if it could stand on its own merits, you would not hesitate to allow it to stand up to whatever scrutiny is required and you're refusing to let that happen.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — So I ask you, Mr. Minister, why don't you stop this masquerade about your commitment to environmental protection? Why don't you do the responsible thing, and why don't you stop construction of this project now and allow the federal environment review process to be carried out, so that the money that the people of Saskatchewan have at risk is protected before you go too far — and you've gone too far already — but before you even go further?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I don't need a lecture from that member — from that member, Mr. Speaker — as it relates to the protection of the environment. He sat, Mr. Speaker, on the treasury benches of the government that made the decision to put 10 feet of asphalt and dirt over the biggest PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) spill in the history of this country, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Only a few months ago, Mr. Speaker, only a few months ago we finally mitigated a major environmental boondoggle perpetrated by that party, Mr. Speaker, on the people of Cumberland House with the Squaw Rapids project, Mr. Speaker. I need no lecture from that member, or any one from that side of the House, as it relates to protecting the environment.

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

**Mr. Lyons:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. My question today is to the same minister, the minister who, for the last two years, has been lectured by the people of this province about suppressing information, about covering up information, about hiding information, about cooking the books on information . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order, order, order. I'm afraid we're seeing a little bit of debate, and I must say it's on both sides of the House so let's . . . Order, order, order, order, order. I've just . . . Order, order. I just remind the questioner and the people who answer the questions that debate doesn't allow for a smooth question period, and I'm bringing that to your attention.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier who has been lectured by people across Canada for two years on the fact that his government is breaking the law, and who is now reaping the consequences for that bad doing.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, as the minister will, Mr. Minister, one Elizabeth May, the former executive assistant to the former federal minister of the Environment, Tom McMillan, who warned you nearly two years ago that proper procedures were not being followed, and that your government had cooked up a political deal with the federal government in place in Ottawa. Mr. Minister, I would say that in light of yesterday's decision by the courts, Miss May has much more credibility on this project than anything that you could say.

Mr. Minister, in that regard, will you table the correspondence between yourself and between the former Environment minister in relation to this project to prove to the people once and for all that this was nothing more than a political boondoggle.

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — A couple of points, Mr. Speaker. Number one, this Elizabeth May, I've never met her in my entire life; I doubt that I'll ever have that opportunity. I doubt that I'll ever have that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, but let me just say that this is the woman who resigned on a very significant point of principle and couldn't find it in her heart or soul to tell anybody what that was until several months later when there was an election looming federally, Mr. Speaker. Tell me how credible that is.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, secondly, Mr. Speaker, the member who just addressed that question I think is stretching credibility to the limit. On almost every occasion when he asked a question on this project, or virtually any other, as he did the other day when he talked about 40 years to fill the dam and the hydrology studies of Mr. so and so . . . well Mr. so and so came back and said that he was terribly offended with that member taking out of context small excerpts from his study and said the member was entirely inaccurate.

And the final point, Mr. Speaker, is that at no time have we been operating outside of the law. In all cases we have been in full compliance with the federal licence under which we were operating.

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

**Mr. Lyons:** — Well that's very interesting, Mr. Speaker. New question to the same minister.

Mr. Minister, you will be aware, and we talked about it in the House before, that your government deliberately kept the federal government in the dark as to this project.

And I want to quote, Mr. Minister, from an excerpt of a letter that I've tabled already before, in which George Hood of the Souris Basin Development Authority states:

Our strategy has been and will continue to be to

take the project as far as we possibly can on our own and build as much momentum behind it before we open the process up to other governments including the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, isn't this . . . Mr. Minister, isn't this a case of where your chickens are now coming home to roost and that the dirt that they leave behind in settling on you and your government is going to stick on you and your government and its credibility?

Why did you, Mr. Minister, why did you deliberately circumvent the process of environmental review with the federal government when you knew, when you knew that you were deliberately trying to suppress what was lawfully mandated? Why did you do that?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, the credibility of that particular member went out the window a long, long time ago. I think it went out the window even before he wrote the letter to President-elect Bush and said that if this project is built, we're going to blow it up, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how anybody could possibly believe that the government, the little old Government of Saskatchewan, can steamroller over top of the government in Ottawa, the government in Washington, the government in Manitoba in Winnipeg, and the government in North Dakota.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government in Canada, the federal government in United States, the state government in North Dakota, and the provincial government in Manitoba, in addition to the Government of Saskatchewan, all agreed to this project. Don't tell me we steamrolled over all of those guys, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Mr. Speaker, new question to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. Since its inception, Mr. Minister, this project has been surrounded by controversy, by deceit, by cover-up. We have challenged you, Mr. Minister, we have challenged you to place this controversial project before the International Joint Commission. We're willing to abide by its decision. Why aren't you? What are you afraid of? Why don't you refer it to the IJC (International Joint Commission) so that there's an independent, impartial review of this project to get it settled once and for all?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, they want to stop the project; they want to stop the project. Since the very beginning of this discussion, they want to stop the project. The project, Mr. Speaker, is a good one because of the synergies that come together with water management and power generation and tourism and so on, Mr. Speaker.

The real problem they have, Mr. Speaker, talking about politics, the real problem they have is they wanted to build this in Coronach in spite of the fact that the cost would be the same, and the synergies that create the opportunity wouldn't be there. They wanted to build it in Coronach because they had an NDP member in Coronach at that time. That no longer happens to be the

case, Mr. Speaker. They don't want him. They don't want the guy that used to represent Shaunavon, Mr. Speaker. And the people in Estevan and Souris-Cannington and that part of the world wouldn't care if they never saw any of those guys down there. They are opposed for purely political reasons. They have no respect for the environment.

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

### Privatization of SaskPower Gas Utility

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question to the minister in relation to the Rafferty project which has been found illegal. But I want to say that the reason that the members on this side wanted the development in Coronach was because it could be done at a fraction of the cost for the people of the province, which brings me to the point that I want to raise with you, Mr. Minister.

You have told us that you intend to sell part of SaskPower, the natural gas side. Your own annual report would indicate that the sale should be in the area of \$400 million, half of what it is costing us to carry out this nonsense down in the Premier's riding. When are we going to see some reasonable management from this government that would avoid increased costs for the people of the province in terms of gas, and leave SaskPower intact. Why are you continuing on in this nonsense?

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, SaskPower will not be sold. There's not one cubic metre of gas generated at Shand or Rafferty or Boundary dam or Island Falls. Even the gas peaking generator at Meadow Lake doesn't generate any gas; it generates electricity. What will be offered to the public, Mr. Speaker, is SaskEnergy, not SaskPower.

Now, tell me, Mr. Speaker . . .

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — I appreciate the interruptions from members opposite. It gives me a chance to get my breath and another idea to support my argument, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. I'm going to interrupt again. The minister is attempting to answer the question. I'm sure that the people here would like to hear the answer, and they're having great difficulty.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — To support my argument that members opposite have little or not respect for the environment, Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that that member, when he was the member for Shaunavon, announced a coal-fired plant in his area at Eastend, Shaunavon, Mr. Speaker, in an area that is truly environmentally sensitive, Mr. Speaker, with low quality coal. And was there any talk of any environmental considerations then? None. It was an election year that he had to have an announcement.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister will

know that a coal-fired generator located in Shaunavon . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. The member who is asking the question also has the right to be heard, and I'm asking for that as well.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister. I want to tell you, Mr. Minister, that we believe, and the people of the province believe, that the reason you're pushing so hard with this project, this mud hole down in the south-east corner of the province, is to avoid a defeat of the Premier, to avoid the "Whitemud" of this Premier so that he doesn't end up like Don Getty. That's what this is all about.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I want to ask you: Mr. Minister, don't you realize that the political livelihood of this Premier is not important enough to break the laws of this province and of this country and to waste a billion dollars of taxpayers' money on something to protect your Premier from defeat, as Don Getty was in Alberta? Why are you doing that?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out one difference. That member promised a power plant . . . that member promised a power plant for Shaunavon when he was in political trouble. They promised one in Coronach when Engel was in political trouble, Mr. Speaker. There was no talk of one in Estevan at that time, and my Premier won, Mr. Speaker. That's point number one.

**An Hon. Member:** — And two lost.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Those two lost. That member got blown away, Mr. Speaker, and had to find some safe haven in the centre of Regina to finally get himself elected, Mr. Speaker.

The second point, the second point that should be made, Mr. Speaker, is that I prefer not to waste the time of the House answering that question, because I think my time would be much better spent having the idiotic statements of that member put on the record so I can circulate them around the province.

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

### Motion Regarding Interest Rates

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. My question is to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, last Friday your House Leader informed us and anyone else who was interested that you would be moving a motion which urged . . . in which this Assembly urged, in the strongest possible terms, the federal government to rescind its interest rate policy.

A few moments before the House was scheduled to sit at 10 o'clock, you pulled it. Monday, your House Leader announced we're going to deal with it again, and again you pulled it.

Mr. Minister, you're behaving like a small child on a high-diving board. It seems like a great idea until you see the water.

My question, Mr. Minister, is: what did Mr. Wilson say which caused you to lose your nerve so badly?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I think, Mr. Speaker, that question and the tone and tenor of that question proves the point that the Deputy Premier made today, that the NDP, as it applies to Rafferty-Alameda, were only concerned about the politics of it, Mr. Premier.

Here they have the issue of the day, Mr. Speaker; the answers being given back were totally unsatisfactory to them. Let me make it clear that it is this government, the ministers of this government, and the members of this government, Mr. Speaker, that have been fighting against the interest rate policies of the national government, Mr. Speaker, strongly, led by the Premier, Mr. Speaker. We think that those policies are wrong.

The hon. member wants to debate, I gather today, and I certainly assume we can accommodate him to debate the interest rate issue, but I think all people will acknowledge and see it rather interesting that the NDP had their little political discussion with Shand-Rafferty and then wanted to talk about something else, Mr. Speaker.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### MOTION UNDER RULE 16

#### Protection of Environment

**Mr. Sauder:** — Mr. Speaker, it indeed gives me great pleasure to be able stand today under rule 16 to move a motion that involves a department that I'm involved with, and I'll just read the motion now, and I'll be moving at the end of my remarks. The motion is:

That this Assembly commends the Government of Saskatchewan for its dedication and devotion to the protection of our environment and for its leadership . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that we have an opposition who've said for years that they believe in the environment. When they have an opportunity . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. Order. We have a great number of people who obviously wish to get into the debate. You'll all have your opportunity. At this time let us all give the opportunity to the member for Nipawin to make his remarks.

**Mr. Sauder:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd read that once again:

That this Assembly commend the Government of Saskatchewan for its dedication and devotion to the protection of our environment and for its

leadership in not only enacting environmental protections but also in developing new technologies to prevent air, soil, and water pollution.

Mr. Speaker, since 1982 this administration has approached the issue of the environment with integrity and respect. Over the past few years, the environment has become increasingly important to people the world over. People everywhere are now realizing that the environment is not to be taken for granted.

In the past, people thought nothing of exploiting the environment and manipulating it to their own advantage. Countless numbers of plants and animals have had to be placed on the endangered species list because man's activities have been such that it has made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to survive in the environment because man's activities have made fundamental changes to it.

Saskatchewan has been no exception. People here, too, are becoming more and more aware of how their activities affect the environment, which we all too often take for granted.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. As I said earlier, those who wish to get into the debate will have that opportunity. I don't think it's fair to the member from Nipawin, who is attempting to make his remarks, to be continually interrupted. And I don't think it's fair for anybody to have to endure that. Therefore, I once more ask the members in the House to give him the opportunity to make his remarks.

**Mr. Sauder:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting that for people who profess and claim to have an interest in the environment, they don't want to talk about it reasonably and rationally, but to holler from their seats.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the stand that this government has taken on the environment. Our policies and initiatives have always been guided by, and have only been undertaken after, careful consideration of the impact that they'll have on our environment — all of them, Mr. Speaker. This administration has a keen awareness of the fact that certain initiatives may have adverse effects on the environment, and we therefore make sure that we are kept abreast of any potential dangers.

We've also undertaken initiatives to reverse some of the damage that has occurred in the past. In many cases, Mr. Speaker, damage that has occurred is irreversible; however, in cases where we can make a difference, we are making that effort.

Late last fall, for an instance, the federal government announced that as of 1990 leaded gasoline would be taken off the market. It's now fairly common knowledge that that gasoline is posing serious threats to our environment.

At the provincial level, our government recently introduced a 2 cent a litre non-rebatable tax, environmental tax on leaded gasoline. The reason that

this tax was introduced was to discourage people from using it, to use more environmentally safe gasoline.

Mr. Speaker, not only does leaded gasoline produce sulphur dioxide which is linked to acid rain when it's burned, it's also contributing to the greenhouse effect; the greenhouse effect, Mr. Speaker, that we're all familiar with — the gradual raising of the average temperature of the earth. Saskatchewan is a living, breathing example of what that effect can mean. Mr. Speaker, we've already been experiencing severe drought over the last year or two. An increase in the average temperature can only make matters worse.

We already have a water supply problem without an increase in the temperatures. Many of our rivers and streams already run dry when the heat of the summer gets to be too long and too hot. Mr. Speaker, I'm not an expert in that field, and I don't really know if the process can be reversed. I'm not sure if anyone does, but we do know that we have the capacities to slow that down, if not to stop it totally. And that's precisely why we have placed the non-rebatable tax on leaded gasoline. It's one more step in the right direction, Mr. Speaker.

Power has become essential to our current way of life, and the Shand power project in south-eastern Saskatchewan is going to help to provide more power while maintaining a healthy environment. With regard to Shand, Mr. Speaker, which has been under attack by members of the opposition, not for environmental reasons, purely political reasons, this government has undertaken extensive measures to make sure that that power station does not contribute to future atmospheric problems.

Mr. Speaker, Shand will use the latest in technology to limit emissions of sulphur dioxide into the air. It'll use a zero discharge system. It'll be the first in Canada to use that. That system is a water management system. Any water that is used will be kept on the site and will be stored in ponds lined with non-permeable liners. This will ensure that the water will not escape into the river system or into the underground water system. Mr. Speaker, it follows from reason that if this water is not allowed to make its way back into the river or the underground water system, it goes to follow that we are protecting our water supply.

In addition, the Shand power station will use a lime injection system to remove the noxious fumes that have been associated with acid rain. This system works by turning the sulphur dioxide into a solid, which then can be collected and disposed of, rather than carried away by the wind, thus protecting the air and environment. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the sulphur dioxide will be reduced by 85 per cent with the addition of a Finnish system called Lifac, as well as additional humidification process.

The plant will also use a locally mined lignite coal, which has a lower sulphur coal and a higher sodium content, to power its turbine. As a result, it is easier to turn the sulphur dioxide into a solid and, because the coal has a higher heating value, less is required to produce the same amount of heat and energy.

Mr. Speaker, another initiative of this government: last fall we announced a joint venture with the federal government to establish the Grasslands National Park. This park is located between Val Marie and Killdeer in the south-western portion of our province, and it will be one of the only grassland areas in the world to be preserved in its natural state, one of the only grassland areas in the world to be left untouched by man.

Mr. Speaker, we entered into another agreement with the federal government to establish the Last Mountain national wildlife area. It's a conservation area that is home for many wild migratory birds, birds such as white pelicans, gulls, terns, cormorants, and others. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this area has already become an internationally recognized conservation area, and it is a haven not only for those birds and other animals that are inhabitants of the area, it is also a haven for bird watchers and other naturalists, environmentalists, and botanists.

Another project of this government, an initiative, is the aluminum can and the plastic bottle recycling program done in co-operation with SARCAN Recycling Inc. Not only are disabled people benefitting through the jobs provided there, but it is a step toward the elimination of wastes being put back into our environment, a utilization of a product which was formerly thrown away. It is recycled and reused, Mr. Speaker, not only a saving to that project but also to energy and a saving to our environment and contamination on our roadsides, parks, and other places. Mr. Speaker, that initiative has received praise from all over the country.

We've established the Boundary dam containment site to store PCBs. This is a favourite topic of our members opposite when it deals with PCBs. This site . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Could I ask the members on the opposite side of the House to allow the member to continue his speech, please. It would be appreciated. Thank you.

**Mr. Sauder:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This site meets or exceeds all federal and provincial legislation regarding the storage of PCBs. Until recently they were being stored at various sites across the province, but as of March 1 this year the process of moving PCBs from SaskPower to the Boundary dam storage site was started, and as of June 1 the site will open up to industry at large.

The impact of such an initiative is twofold: it removes the threat of PCB-related disasters from areas of high population density; then it makes regulating the area and ensuring that accidents don't happen much more effective.

I should also mention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that while PCBs are in transit to Boundary dam storage site, the transportation of dangerous goods legislation, which was introduced to reduce the risk of accidental spills, must be strictly adhered to.

The only PCB-contaminated material that is not accepted at that storage site are mineral oils contaminated at less

than 500 parts per million. These oils go to PPM Canada Inc. in Regina, which use a chemical process to destroy PCBs to a level of less than two parts per million.

Incidentally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, during this process there are no emissions into the atmosphere. The solid wastes are stored and shipped out of the province for disposal, and when the fluids are brought to PPM Canada Inc., they are stored no longer than 10 days in double-lined storage tanks — protection for the environment, Mr. Speaker, from a dangerous chemical.

Our efforts reflect not only our concern with its well-being but also . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Member from Regina Elphinstone, would you allow the member to continue his speech please.

(1445)

**Mr. Sauder:** — Thank you once again, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I was saying, our efforts not only . . . will reflect not only our concern with our environment's well-being, but also our efforts to improve the way that wastes are handled in order to not pose a further threat to our environment. We know that it is our job to act responsibly with regard to the protection of the environment, and we are.

We are not the administration that deliberately misled and deceived the people with regard to a massive PCB spill that endangered hundreds of lives. And if that isn't enough, the administration . . . the former administration, who some members presently sit in opposition, actually had the audacity to cover up that spill, Mr. Speaker, to put dirt and asphalt on it and cover it up to think that it would go away, while endangering the lives of the citizens of this city and this province. They covered a substance as potentially dangerous as PCBs with asphalt to hide it from the people rather than warning them and dealing with it. The people have the right to know, but instead of telling them and cleaning it up and disposing of it properly, they covered it up.

Mr. Speaker, these are not the actions of a group of people who should be trusted to run a province and look out for the well-being and best interests of the people they are paid to represent. They are the actions of a group of people who will stop at nothing for their own political gain.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the people count on this government to keep them informed of the situations that they should know about. Not only do we respect the environment, we respect the people that we represent. The people, Mr. Speaker, people that trusted us enough to put us into this Assembly, the least we can do for them is to be honest with them and represent them to the best of our ability. That's what the members of this government are doing.

Mr. Speaker, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, I'd be moving a motion, seconded by my colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg:

That this Assembly commend the Government of

Saskatchewan for its dedication and devotion to the protection of our environment and for its leadership in not only enacting environmental protections but also in developing new technologies to prevent air, soil, and water pollution.

Mr. Speaker, I now so move.

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

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to participate in this debate this afternoon. It's a pleasure because of the record of this government and the record that it's set for itself in the dedication to the environmental concerns of the people of our province.

Mr. Speaker, proof of that dedication can be seen in the actions of this government over the past seven years and in the budget speech delivered to this House just a short time ago — a budget, I might mention, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite voted against.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at some of the recent initiatives of this government, you can see we are really committed to addressing environmental and public safety issues of the day. We introduced hazardous substance regulations, Mr. Speaker, which took effect April 1. These regulations control the storage of hazardous chemicals and are aimed at minimizing environmental and public safety hazards.

Some of these measures include the registration of storage facilities, ministerial approval for new facilities, and the upgrading of existing facilities within specified periods of time. They won't be left for ever. They have to be done, and they have to be done in a specific period of time.

The focus of these regulations is prevention, Mr. Speaker. It's on prevention, and that's where it should be. Let's prevent the problem before it occurs. With the required preventative measures installed and the contingency plans in place, the potential risk to the environment, to our families, of storing these hazardous substances should be greatly reduced.

Mr. Speaker, in September of 1986 the government announced an institutional chemical collection program. Through the program the government collected 15 tons of surplus old and potentially dangerous chemicals and substances from schools and hospitals all over this province. Imagine that — 15 tons of dangerous waste in such sensitive places as schools and hospitals, left by the previous administration — left.

As a preventative measure, a guide to laboratory safety and chemical management in school science studies activities was prepared by the department staff and provided to these institutions as a means to prevent the same sort of situation occurring again.

Again, the emphasis is on prevention where it should be, not on cleaning up the mess and not in covering it up. It's on education, Mr. Speaker, and that's where it belongs.

Mr. Speaker, we produced a program, first in North America, for our beverage container recycle program.

Through this we combined a recycling program with the employment of the handicapped. There are currently 38 depots employing approximately 120 persons with handicaps, Mr. Speaker, and eventually there'll be over 100 in this province — 100 I'm proud to have here.

I'm pleased to say that one of those depots is in my constituency, in my riding, and it's at Gravelbourg. The members opposite talk about job loss with cans. I ask them to talk to the people about job creation; I ask them to ask the people at Bon Ami; ask them about job creation.

This government introduced PCB regulation, Mr. Speaker. It took steps to ensure all waste PCBs in the province are in secure storage areas. We know where they are, Mr. Speaker; we know where they are; we can guard them; we can safeguard the public. We won't cover them up; we won't cover them up with pavement as the members on opposite did, Mr. Speaker. We'll deal with them; we'll deal with them properly. This government cares, Mr. Speaker, but it also acts; it acts properly.

The site near Boundary dam meets and exceeds all federal and provincial legislation with respect to PCB storage, and the transportation of materials to the site will strictly follow transportation goods legislation guide-lines.

We care about the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, but we also act; we act to protect them. Mr. Speaker, last year a program to eliminate the dangers related with old coal mines was established. As far as can be determined, no other province has established a separate program to locate, evaluate, remedy the problems with abandoned coal mines. We don't ignore the problem; we deal with it.

My constituency has some abandoned coal mines, and I am pleased that this government cares for the people of this province and the people of my constituency. It's also prepared to deal with the problem; it's prepared to deal with the problem properly and do it now.

This government was involved in the regulation of one of the first full uranium mine decommissioning projects in North America, Mr. Speaker. This was at Eldorado, Beaver Lodge uranium operation, Mr. Speaker. And preliminary monitoring of water quality at the site indicates the provincial requirement of meeting the water quality objectives will be achieved.

Mr. Speaker, the government took steps to clean up approximately 20 tons of arsenic trioxide from an old gold mine operation on the shores of Douglas Lake. This problem, Mr. Speaker, was created in the late '50s and early '60s and was ignored by every government until the present. We successfully completed the program in October of 1987. This government cares, Mr. Speaker, it truly cares. But it also acts; it doesn't cover up and it doesn't ignore it; it acts and it acts properly.

And I'd like to add, Mr. Speaker, that public reaction to the clean-up has been very positive; it's been very, very positive. Saskatchewan people truly appreciate that this government deals with the problem areas. It acts with them; it acts with them properly. It doesn't ignore them; it

doesn't cover them up; it doesn't drive over them.

I think there's sufficient evidence to indicate our government has been very committed to the quality of life for residents of our province that a healthy environment brings and can bring in the future. The budget just delivered a few weeks ago indicated our commitment continues. It didn't just begin; it continues.

We are undertaking a blue box pilot project to expand our waste recycling activities. This project provides collection boxes for newspapers, cans, bottles for recycling. We won't drive around them or over top of them; we'll collect them and we'll dispose of them properly; we'll recycle them.

We are introducing a comprehensive water management program to firstly and foremostly ensure safe water for our communities. We care about the water. We are entering into a three-year, \$54 million soil conservation agreement with the federal government. Our soil, our most valuable renewable resource, must be conserved so future generations can enjoy the type of environment we've had in the past and we'll have in the future.

This year we'll be providing \$1.8 million for the first year of a five-year, \$9 million commitment to AgWest Biotech Incorporated to develop environmentally safe biopesticides. This government cares, and cares for our farm families. It cares about the children; it cares enough to protect them. New technology will help us do that, Mr. Speaker. This is a government of change and progress, and we'll progress properly; we'll do it right.

We'll be providing over \$5 million to continue the five-year, 50 million seedling reforestation program. Reforestation is a priority, Mr. Speaker; it's a priority of this government. Forests and reforestation ensure a healthy environment for the future.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've introduced the 2 cent a litre non-rebatable surcharge on leaded fuel to encourage the use of unleaded fuel. This government cares about our environment, Mr. Speaker; it also acts. It will discourage the use of environmentally harmful products.

And, Mr. Speaker, this represents our first step in taxing environmental harmful products. This will continue.

Mr. Speaker, the actions of this government prove that the protection of our environment remains an important priority. I am certain that our government will continue to take positive action to preserve the natural environment of Saskatchewan for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.

And I want to mention, I want to mention for a minute, Rafferty, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to mention it. I'd like to mention it to the members opposite.

I come from the South, Mr. Speaker; I come from the South. I know about drought; I know all about it. I've lived it; I've lived it my whole life. I've seen the water come; I've seen the water come and go every spring, Mr. Speaker. I know about the value of water; I know about the value of water, Mr. Speaker. I support water



management; I support water management and I support the environment.

I know what water can do for the quality of life of people of southern Saskatchewan. This is not a political issue; it's not a political issue. It's one of common sense. It's one of common sense, Mr. Speaker, one of which the members opposite will really have a hard time to relate to, because it involves common sense. It doesn't involve politics, it involves common sense.

Tommy Douglas knew about water management, Mr. Speaker. He knew about water management, he knew about the drought, and he cared. He cared enough to support it. He supported water management, Mr. Speaker. He supported water management of the Souris; he supported water management.

John Diefenbaker knew about water management; John Diefenbaker knew about water management, Mr. Speaker. He knew about the drought and he cared. He supported Rafferty.

Our Premier knows about water management. He knows enough to care; he really cares. He cares about floods, he cares about droughts, he cares about the people of this province, and he had guts enough to do it. He had the guts enough to do something about it. He knew about the value of water; he really knew. He knows about the South; he knows about drought and the need for water and water management.

He knows about the need for power; he knows about the need for power and what will happen if the lights go out. He knows of the value of water management and its potential for power and for power produced in Saskatchewan by Saskatchewan residents, not by people outside of the province. What are we going to do? Import it? He knows of the value of power and power generation in the ability to create jobs — jobs for Saskatchewan people, not for people outside the province, Mr. Speaker.

He knows about the alternatives: imported power, nuclear power. Turn off the lights; energy efficient light bulbs. Wind, the only place where there's enough wind in this country would be from the members opposite.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to be able to make some comments for the brief time that we have in this debate. I want to begin by simply saying that when this resolution was introduced, I concluded that it was really stretching a very long bow, but in light of the events that have taken place in the last two days, Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely incredible. And I guess maybe that is one of the reasons why we have the Minister of the Environment not taking part in this debate here today, on a very important day when such important issues are before this legislature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me begin by saying the following. We are a turning point in the human habitation

of this earth. No one questions that the environment is a complex, delicately balanced system which is being bombarded by pollutants at an ever increasing rate. If we don't act now to check the continued pollution of the earth and the destruction of our environment, we will eventually destroy the fitness of the planet as a place for humans.

And for this reason, we need commitment and political will from government. We need a carefully thought out, comprehensive, sustainable development strategy which is not ignored or not subverted whenever government, for its partisan political reasons, feels it should do so as it has done in recent months here in Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Unfortunately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government doesn't have that strategy. It doesn't have the political will. It doesn't have the commitment, and on too many occasions it has been prepared to ignore environmental protection requirements to please political friends or to achieve political ends, and that's what's wrong with their policy.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — It appears recently that someone showed this government a poll that said people were becoming more concerned about environmental issues, and someone decided that some words on the environment were required in the throne speech and in the budget. Unfortunately, the words are not enough. It's action and leadership and political will that is required, not just a public relations exercise.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — This government's record on environmental matters is a dismal one, and beyond any doubt it's probably the worst one in all of Canada. Not only has the Premier failed to bring into place adequate environmental protection policies and programs, but he has conspired to break his own laws in order to avoid meeting all the environmental protection requirements in the Rafferty-Alameda project.

This Premier is pretending to be a born again environmentalist, but unfortunately he turns out to be like those of the Jimmy Swaggarts and the Jimmy Bakkers and others who preach the rules of human behaviour but don't believe those rules that they apply to them.

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

(1500)

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Let us examine that record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of this government and this Premier. That record shows that after seven years, seven long years, the environment protection and enhancement has been one of their greatest failures. Political and corporate considerations have continued to be a greater priority than planning for a secure, sustainable future.

And just this month, this Minister of the Environment,

who is the minister today, put on a good act. In fact, it was last month. He put on a good act in front of microphones and television cameras when he pretended to show outrage at a leak of hydrogen sulphide gas from the heavy oil upgrader, a leak, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which threatened the health of school children at Henry Braun School in Regina, and in fact several children developed headaches and became nauseous.

The minister admitted that there had been other incidents at the upgrader, but said nothing about why he had been so silent about them. Workers at the construction site said that this was not the first leak of this kind. Oh yes, the minister was outraged for one day, but within just a matter of hours the minister had turned into a puppy again, and said that no action would be taken, that he will turn a blind eye and hope corrective measures would be taken.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know very well the signal which the minister sent in this inept handling of this matter. He told potential polluters that they can go right ahead, they can go right ahead and ignore required protection measures because if an accident occurs, this minister, this Premier, will let them get away with it providing they promise not to let it happen again. That's the signal that he sent, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It happened again and the minister, caught in his own ineptitude, sounded tough again. But there should be concern because one of these times, one of these times, somewhere, health will be damaged or life may be lost, or irreparable harm may be inflicted on a community, and fake outrage then will be too late and not enough. All of this happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the same week that the throne speech was read in this legislature, putting a lie to the so-called commitment to the protection and the enhancement of our environment by those members opposite.

During the same period of time, another revelation provided evidence that this same minister and the Premier knowingly participated in the conspiracy to withhold information on the Rafferty-Alameda projects from the governments of Canada and Manitoba and from the public in Saskatchewan. And yesterday the federal Court of Appeal — the federal court . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. I would have to ask the members to allow the member from Regina North East to at least give his address to the House.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate you telling the member from Kelvington-Wadena not to be so vociferous in his interruption.

As I was saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, yesterday the federal court confirmed all of the suspicions that we and the public has had for some time, and the licence issued without the required review — a political deal had been struck and environmental concerns took second place.

So it is fair to ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which is the real Minister of the Environment? The man who performs moral outrage in front of the television cameras, or the man who, behind the scenes, agrees that environmental

concerns should not be allowed to stand in the way of this government's drive to build a pork-barrel project in the Premier's riding.

Which is the real Premier? The man who has in his throne speech uttered words which pretend to show concern for environmental issues, or the man who has directed that his pet project in his constituency go ahead even if his own laws are broken, even if serious environmental destruction is caused in the process. Which ones are they, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

With this kind of record, anything that this Premier says about his commitment to the environment is suspect and just cannot be believed. The big lie approach to democratic government must be stopped, and another reason why this . . . clearly in the eyes of the public, it's time for a change.

Now before yesterday, Mr. Speaker, before yesterday those members opposite could have been excused if they would have disagreed with me today. They could have been excused because clearly the cabinet has withheld from the back-benchers the information on this project which they should have had. So one can understand why they would be ignorant about it.

But after the last two days there is no longer any excuse for that because they know that they were deceived and they were misled by their own Premier and by their own Minister of the Environment and by their Deputy Premier. And if they have any principle, they would stand up and say that that is wrong and they will have no part of it.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — So, Mr. Speaker, I think that this resolution, as unfortunate timing as it is for the government opposite, is not a resolution that is worth consideration by this Assembly, because it's irrelevant.

And so I want to move an amendment, seconded by my colleague, the member from Rosemont. The amendment I want to move is:

That all the words after the word "Assembly" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

regrets that the Government of Saskatchewan has failed to develop effective measures to protect the environment, has failed to adhere to existing environmental protection laws and procedures, and has failed to propose a comprehensive strategy for sustainable economic development.

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

**The Speaker:** — Order.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, very much.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that I'm only too pleased to be able to rise and second the amendment put forward by my friend and colleague, the member from Regina North East. And I do so, Mr. Speaker, because to me this amendment signals and signifies a new direction that our

party and our caucus is going to take in regards to our approach to questions of development and the environment.

And I want to be able to speak to that, Mr. Speaker, in regards to my remarks in a few moments, but I'd first like to deal with what I consider the cynical and somewhat hypocritical original motion put forward by the members opposite.

I think we want to put their motion in context, and in the political context of what's happening on the global scale, Mr. Speaker. I think it's evident to everyone in political life in Saskatchewan, in Canada, and around the world, that the environment has become a major issue, an issue of global importance. And there's a reason why that has taken place.

That reason is quite frankly this: it's because the world is teetering on the edge of numerous ecological catastrophes. We don't have to look any farther than Valdez and Prince William Sound in Alaska to see the kind of environmental havoc being brought upon the earth.

We don't have to look very much farther than the St. Maurice River and where it flows into the St. Lawrence River system, and to see the kind of chemicals that have recently been poured into that river by a spill from a chemical plant.

We don't have to look very much farther than our southern neighbours in Brazil to see what has been called the lungs of the earth being destroyed through clear-cutting, being destroyed through a process and a policy of tearing down the most major rain forest, the rain forest which provides one-fifth of all oxygen produced on the earth's surface being destroyed.

We don't have to look very much farther than those three examples, Mr. Speaker, to realize what is happening. The people of this planet are not stupid. The people of this planet have put together a communications network and have put together communications tools so that they're able to carry information from one corner of the globe to the other. And in doing so we, the people of the globe, see the kind of environmental destruction being wrecked upon this planet. And we, the people of the globe, say enough is enough.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, finally the people of the globe are getting through to the elected politicians. And in doing so, what we have seen is a process whereby those who, not more than three or four or two years ago, talked about people who raised environmental issues as being kooks or as being crazy or as being oddballs, now all of a sudden are trying to wrap themselves in the cloak of environmental responsibility and respectability.

And that's the political context that we find happening here in Saskatchewan where the members of the Progressive Conservative Party who have not cared one whit — not one whit — since 1982 about the development of environmental policy in this province, now all of a sudden realize that environmental issues are becoming more and more critical in people's

consciousness.

So what do we find? We find a process whereby the Progressive Conservative Party in Saskatchewan, and in other places across Canada, have said, whoops, it's politically popular to think and talk about the environment, so we better start thinking and talking a bit about the environment. And you notice, Mr. Speaker, I said thinking and talking about the environment because there's a great gap between thinking and talking and doing. Because the record of this government, the record of this government since 1982 has been a policy of inaction.

And I want to remind you, Mr. Speaker, of the Magna Carta of environmental rights which was dangled as bait before the electorate by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs — I believe her title is — who dangled it before the election, all of a sudden to disappear somewhere into the abyss of the Progressive Conservative Party's litany of broken promises. Disappeared, Mr. Speaker, not looked after, not even referred to in the Speech from the Throne, not even referred to in terms of developing an environmental policy for sustainable economic development for this province.

So the record, Mr. Speaker, even on that level, when it's judged by the people of the province, the level of cynicism in dealing with the environment is clear. And the issue of Rafferty-Alameda does nothing more than reinforce the criticisms that people who have been involved in the environmental movement have been saying that to reinforce the cynical use of the issue of the environment for political purposes. If you look at what happened in the Rafferty-Alameda environmental review process, it will become even more clear.

First of all, we had the government and the minister, the present Minister of the Environment, refuse to allow full public hearings, official public hearings into the Shand power plant project. This despite the fact that they intend to utilize a method, an unproven, untried, and totally untested method, to reduce sulphur and nitrogen emissions from the coal burning in that particular coal-fired plant.

Now we have a new technology that they're going to introduce, but at the same time, time and time again, refuse calls for a public hearing.

Secondly, when it came to the dam, Rafferty dam and Alameda dam, did the government hold official public hearings into that? The answer to that is no. What they did instead was set up a panel to hold unofficial hearings. And there's a big distinction in terms of future events, Mr. Speaker. They set up a panel to hold unofficial hearings to hear briefs and submissions by people who have close connections to the government, including Darla Hunter, a lawyer with MacPherson, Leslie & Tyerman, who now turns up, Mr. Speaker, on the round table of the environment, but who also, Mr. Speaker, makes her livelihood as a lawyer for Saskatchewan Power, for the same minister that has engaged in the suppression and cover-up of information relating to Rafferty-Alameda.

(1515)

Who else do we find involved in that? We find Dean Brennan from the school of commerce at the University of Saskatchewan. All of a sudden, Dean Brennan's wife turns up on this round table of the environment to act as another consultant to the government on the environment.

One after another after another we see people with close political connections to this government trying to undertake a political operation . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. If the hon. members wish to engage in debate, perhaps they should withdraw and engage outside, but at this time the member for Regina Rosemont is making his remarks.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Time and time again we have seen members of the government attempt to utilize the political process and the environmental review process for political advantage. And Rafferty-Alameda is probably the biggest case in which they've been caught with their hands in the cookie jar.

But, Mr. Speaker, being opposed to that kind of environmental manipulation is not enough. And as I said earlier, the amendment and the fact that the deputy leader of our party, the New Democratic Party, is the environment critic, is a clear signal to the people of this province that we are going to have a new day in dealing with the environment, that we are not going to use the environment as a cynical, political issue, but we are making a new commitment when it comes to the environment.

The members opposite talk about adding to the greenhouse effect, as if somehow the building of the Shand power plant doesn't add to the greenhouse effect. Mr. Speaker, why aren't those members who stand up and say, we don't want to add to the greenhouse effect, standing in their place saying, we're going to stop building Shand, we're going to put an end to coal-fired power stations in this province, we're going to engage in a process where we engage in energy efficiency, in energy conservation?

And yes, that includes things like energy-efficient light bulbs which, according to SaskPower engineers, would save the province between 150 and 200 megawatts of power if they were introduced. You know, that may not be as politically popular as the Premier of the province building a power plant in his own constituency, but it certainly is going to save the environment, the ozone layer, reduce the effect of the greenhouse effect, and also save Saskatchewan taxpayers money, also save the Saskatchewan taxpayers \$1.4 billion.

You know, through modern construction techniques, Mr. Speaker, we could engage in a new era of energy conservation . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

**Mr. Gleim:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a great pleasure for me to speak on this motion this afternoon, a motion that commends what this PC government has done for

environmental for the province of Saskatchewan.

The members across the way like to envision themselves as environmentalists. The environment is the utmost in their minds, or so they would like everybody to think. The reality of that, Mr. Speaker, is that our NDP members are opportunists — opportunists in every sense of the word, Mr. Speaker. They have no policy, so when they realized that the environmental concerns were important to the PC Party of Saskatchewan, they attached themselves to our cause.

Mr. Speaker, we as the PC government recognize that the protection of our environment is a responsibility — it is a responsibility of all governments in Canada. Governments of today must respond to the stress placed on environment by the activities of today's world.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, odd that the NDP Party, a party who has been so irresponsible in the past, would claim to be so conscientious today. Yes, Mr. Speaker, conscientious today. Let's reflect for a moment, Mr. Speaker.

In 1976 the NDP government of the day chose to ignore — yes, Mr. Speaker, ignore a spill of 21,000 litres of PCB fluids in a Regina plant here, right in Regina. Yes, Mr. Speaker, ignore. And furthermore, besides ignoring it, they covered it up. And I listened to the members across talking about cover-ups. I guess maybe they were pointing the finger in the wrong direction, because who was doing the covering up? It was those members across the way, Mr. Speaker. They covered it up with cement, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, it took that NDP government two years to react to that spill, Mr. Speaker. Two years, Mr. Speaker, to react, and that was only because the public became aware of the situation, Mr. Speaker. It took the public to bring them to their senses. They talk about the cover-ups. I will repeat again, those people are experts at cover-ups.

And it was by no means, Mr. Speaker, public knowledge that this spill occurred. It was a news leak that advised them of it, not the government, Mr. Speaker; it was a news leak. Another leak.

Even after the public became aware of the possibility of a PC contamination, it took that government nearly five years to implement a monitoring and site surveillance program, Mr. Speaker. Nearly five years to implement a program, a surveillance program. To this day, the slow reaction time of that government haunts the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Those people will not forget, Mr. Speaker.

Because of our public concerns and this government's realization of the effects of PCB contamination, we have acted in addressing this problem through a number of programs introduced in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker. In 1989 the Boundary dam PC storage facilities will become operational. By centralizing the storage of PCBs in this facility, our government will be able to deal with this problem until a high temperature incineration facility becomes available. This site is specially designed to receive and safely store these wastes. PCBs currently in

storage in over a hundred sites throughout the province will be given priority and will be transported to this facility in this year.

The same priority is given to hazardous agricultural chemicals. Our governments will be implementing a program to collect and dispose of these chemicals which are currently being stored across the province. This new program will ensure that dangers associated to the storage of these chemicals are eliminated. Programs such as these are important to our government.

We are also concerned and dealing with the problem of waste materials that are accumulating in many of our communities, materials such as cans, bottles, newspapers. As a first step we have implemented a recycling program for aluminum cans and plastic bottles through the SARCAN recycling system, Mr. Speaker. This new program employs over 100 disabled people, Mr. Speaker, over 100 disabled people. We have one of them in my constituency, the town of Shaunavon, and it has become a model for other provincial governments to follow. Yes, Mr. Speaker, a model.

This budget indicated that we are expanding on our recycling activities. I am referring explicitly to our blue box pilot project. This project will provide collection boxes, blue collection boxes, alongside the regular containers so that Saskatchewan residents can deposit products such as newspaper, cans, bottles for recycling.

This government has allotted approximately \$280,000 to this important project, Mr. Speaker. Our recent budget reaffirms our government's commitment to all environmental issues.

We talk about environmental issues. We have one member talk about coal-fired plant down in my area; then we have another member just standing up and just finished telling us that we should abandon coal-fired power plant. Where do they stand? They're either on this side or they're on that side. No, they're on neither side. They're either for it or against it; you can't be both.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion the members opposite address only urban environmental concerns. They have a very narrow perspective on a lot of these things on environmental in Saskatchewan. Don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker, urban issues are at the forefront of our minds as well, Mr. Speaker, but in addressing them we do not ignore the environmental concerns of rural Saskatchewan too.

I realize that the opposition caucus is made up of almost entirely urban members, but they should not ignore rural members, and that is mainly made up of this side of the government. Please recognize all environmental concerns of Saskatchewan, but please do not put one ahead of the other because they do affect our entire province.

I would like at this time to recognize the drought in Saskatchewan. This is an important environmental challenge, Mr. Speaker, one that this PC government is addressing. Obviously the key concern is the lack of water. That, Mr. Speaker, is why we implemented the

Rafferty-Alameda dam project.

The opposition members across the way called it a mud hole. Water conservation projects in this province and in the Souris Basin in the south-eastern Saskatchewan — we need those kinds of projects. And I am very, very much sensitive about somebody calling it a mud hole, because a mud hole is something we don't build.

What we're trying to do is have a water management project in Saskatchewan. Managing our water system is very important to agricultural, and mainly so in the south-western part of the province, as our member, my member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg mentioned. We live in probably a drier area than most of the people do in the province of Saskatchewan, and we are very concerned about dams, water, and water management.

Water management is also . . . we are concerned with this water management is . . . comes along is irrigation, flood control, to the benefit of the surrounding municipalities. And it also . . . we have a big concern because along with this water management comes recreation. Water is very important to the south-western parts of Saskatchewan and all of Saskatchewan.

The Rafferty-Alameda dams will store water from high flow years in the Souris River, Moose Mountain Creek for use during low flood years, Mr. Speaker, low flood years. You store the water and at a time as we have had in the last few years where we've been short of run-off, this is where these dams will come into play, and this is where this water is so important to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this area has not been developed without consideration of the environment. We have committed ourselves to no loss of wildlife habitat resulting from this development, Mr. Speaker. We are protecting our wildlife and their habitat, Mr. Speaker. That is important. We are very sensitive about our wildlife. We're not trying to drive our wildlife out of here. But you do have to remember, Mr. Speaker, wildlife enjoy water just as well as the people . . .

**The Speaker:** — Time has elapsed.

**Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I am more than pleased to have opportunity to participate for a short time in this debate under the rule 16. I've listened with interest as members opposite have in vain, I must say, tried to defend their government's record in terms of environmental accomplishments in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I listened with particular interest as the member from Nipawin, and then again the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and the member from Shaunavon just now in his remarks, lifted up the tax on leaded gas as a major environmental accomplishment of this government — the tax on leaded gas, the leaded gas that's going to disappear within a year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if this government in fact were serious about protecting the environment and protecting the interests of Saskatchewan people and particularly low income Saskatchewan people, the simple solution to the leaded versus unleaded gasoline would have been simply to lower the tax on the unleaded gasoline — equalize the

price in that fashion.

But no, no. They didn't choose the simple solution. They chose the solution that tends to punish the low income people in the province who drive vehicles with leaded gas by putting a non-rebatable tax on leaded fuel in this province. The simple solution would have been to lower the tax on the unleaded.

(1530)

Or, Mr. Speaker, I must say there is even a better solution, and I'll just read that better solution, Mr. Speaker. The solution would have been that the government approach the major oil companies to reduce the price of unleaded gas, which would basically mean no price differential between leaded and unleaded gasoline. That was the best solution of all.

Mr. Speaker, I do not claim to be the author of that solution. In fact, this solution comes from members of the Progressive Conservative Party. This is a policy statement from the Progressive Conservative Party as they met in my city of Moose Jaw in February of this year. They're not even listening, Mr. Speaker, to their own resolutions. They're not even listening to their own people. Here is a good idea right in their own policy documents. Instead of following the logical, the logical course, this government chose in fact to just grab a few more dollars from low and middle income people in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I listened also with interest as the members opposite, the member from Nipawin and then Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and the member from Shaunavon, as they highlighted their program of recycling of aluminum cans in this province. Well, Mr. Speaker, if there has been a dismal failure on the record of this government, it's the way they reintroduced aluminum cans into our province and what has happened since.

And you don't need to see the statistics, Mr. Speaker. All you need to do is drive down the highways these days. Now that the snow is melting in the ditches, you don't see just two or three or a handful of cans; you don't see just tens of cans; you see dozens and dozens of empty cans in the ditches. All you need to do is drive between here and the city of Moose Jaw, and you'll see dozens and dozens of cans in the ditches.

Mr. Speaker, that this so-called recycling and program of the government — which was intended to protect our environment, but it's failing — that it is a failure is indicated in this year's budget documents. Mr. Speaker, if you were to look on page 119 of the *Estimates* this year, you would find a page entitled, the environmental protection fund. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, this is the fund established to pay the rebate on the aluminum cans.

Now the Minister of Finance is predicting that by the end of this fiscal year that fund will contain \$9,144,000 — \$9 million in that fund. That means, Mr. Speaker, that of the nickels that come in with the purchase of each can, \$9,144,000 has not been rebated, or will not have been rebated.

**An Hon. Member:** — How many cans is that?

**Mr. Calvert:** — How many cans is that, the member from Moose Jaw North asks. Well, Mr. Speaker, if we say 5 cents per can not being rebated, at 5 cents a can that's 20 cans for a dollar; at \$9 million, that's 180 million cans that have not been returned — 180 million cans.

Now where are they, Mr. Speaker? Well they're in the environment of Saskatchewan; they're along the ditches; they're along the roadsides. We're going to find them in the bottoms of our lakes; we're going to see them on the golf courses; we're finding them in the garbage dumps.

**An Hon. Member:** — They're up in the Beaver River.

**Mr. Calvert:** — My colleague from Regina says they're up in the Beaver River — 180 million cans scattered into the environment of Saskatchewan. And this . . . Members opposite stand up and boast about this as their great environmental accomplishment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's another side to this environmental protection fund. We have now \$9 million, or will have \$9 million in the kitty, and we've had a throne speech that makes no mention of this environmental protection fund. I've heard nothing by way of a ministerial statement or any comment in the press from the minister about an intention to use this fund.

Mr. Speaker, if this government were truly sincere about protecting the environment of Saskatchewan and thereby sharing in protection of the global environment; if this government were serious about protecting the soil, the water, and the air; if it were serious about sustainable development, here they have a kitty of \$9 million which they could be using, Mr. Speaker.

Let me toss out a few ideas of things they could be doing with this \$9 million. This very summer, Mr. Speaker, they could take some of that \$9 million and, rather than hiring students to sit in cubicles and count gas receipts, Mr. Speaker, they could be hiring students to go out into southern Saskatchewan and northern Saskatchewan to plant trees, Mr. Speaker.

We should be planting trees, in my view, across this province. A year ago the Minister of Parks introduced to our province a provincial tree, and I and we supported him in that. Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that this summer, that this summer we are not out across southern Saskatchewan planting, planting that white birch? Why are we not planting those trees in the ditches and around the dug-outs? Why are we not building the shelter-belts?

We have \$9 million in a fund. We could be employing young people this summer. They could be out working; we could be developing nurseries; we could be planting trees, and thereby, and thereby, Mr. Speaker, sincerely protecting our environment, sincerely dealing with soil erosion problems, sincerely dealing with water conservation, sincerely dealing with air quality by that one program alone.

Mr. Speaker, we could be taking some of that \$9 million in funding in our institutions of higher learning, in the

universities and technical schools. We could be funding courses on sustainable economic development. We are going to need the best of our young people, the most talented of our young people, to be applying their talents to sustainable economic development. Why not take some of this money, put it in the hands of our educational institutions to fund courses for training in sustainable economic development?

Mr. Speaker, we could take some of that money and we could fund environmental groups in our province concerned about environmental issues; volunteers who are out there working on behalf of the environment. We could take some of that money and share it with local environmental groups and associations who are concerned about a problem in their local area.

For instance, for instance, Mr. Speaker, the group of men and women around the community of Mossbank who are coming together to form an association to deal with the salt drifting off Old Wives Lake, a major environmental problem in their corner of the province. They need some support, Mr. Speaker; they need some help in what they're doing. We have a kitty here now — the Minister of Finance tells us will be \$9 million — yet we have no notion, no sign, no word of a plan for the expenditure of that money.

Mr. Speaker, that figure in this year's budget *Estimates* tells me that, one, their can return system has been a disaster. We have now 180 million cans scattered throughout the province. And because we have not heard a word, not a word about a plan to use that money in a constructive way, it tells me that the commitment to the environment that this government purports through this motion is insincere, to say the least.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I am more than happy to stand in this debate and to support the amendment that my colleagues have moved and seconded, an amendment that does condemn this government for its failure to develop effective measures to protect the environment. The headlines of these past few weeks are indicative of that failure; obviously they have failed. We have spills in our uranium mines; we have clouds of stuff floating over Regina. Obviously they have failed to protect our environment.

This amendment says they have failed to adhere to the existing environmental protection laws. We're not just saying that; environmental groups are not saying that — the federal courts of Canada are saying that this week, Mr. Speaker.

This amendment condemns this government for its failure to propose a strategy for a sustainable economic development and that, too, is obvious, Mr. Speaker. This government has but one — but one — economic development plan and that's under the name of privatization.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Time has elapsed.

**Mr. Britton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to rise and participate in this rule 16 debate, particularly today, Mr. Speaker, when the environment is

in the forefront. From the statements made by my colleagues, there's no doubt — it has to be obvious to the House, Mr. Speaker — that the Government of Saskatchewan is committed, even dedicated, to the preservation of the quality of life that a healthy environment ensures.

Mr. Speaker, more than that, we are a leader. I would like to talk about some of our programs. The environmental programs of this PC government are considered a leader either in Canada or the world. Mr. Speaker, in our air and land protection branch, there are three programs we are leaders in. The institutional chemical collection program that the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg spoke of is unique in North America.

Mr. Speaker, 314 institutions were visited and approximately 15 tonnes of potentially hazardous material were removed. Not only did this deal with the immediate danger, but we've also addressed the prevention of further occurrences, Mr. Speaker, as the member from Assiniboia said. That's something that you see quite regular, Mr. Speaker, coming from this government — innovative new ideas to extend our commitment. There are presently 273 collection sites which service about 85 per cent of the rural municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, in May of 1988, aluminum beverage containers were introduced in Saskatchewan. The system for collection of these containers is another system unique to Saskatchewan across North America. This system that combines the employment of the handicapped with the can collection is an exciting new innovative idea that covers off two concerns, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the collection of the . . . in addition, the collection depot here in Regina is also a processing centre where cans are crushed for transportation to recycling facilities. The densifier used to crush the cans is the largest of its kind in Canada. And that is our air and land protection branch, Mr. Speaker.

And I would like to talk about some firsts in our water quality branch. Mr. Speaker, the up-to-date and comprehensive guide-lines in our design guide for sewage works and design guide for water works are used by municipalities, industries, and consultants. The consultants have indicated, Mr. Speaker, that they view these guides, those of Saskatchewan, as the very best in Canada. And, Mr. Speaker, the computerization systems we have in our water branch are considered to be the most complete in terms of the type of information handled related to water and waste water.

In our mines . . . pollution — sorry, Mr. Speaker — control branch, this government has a great deal to be proud of. The member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has already spoken on these to some extent, but, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to add a few more remarks. The decommissioning of the Eldorado Uranium mine in northern Saskatchewan represents the first full and complete decommissioning of a uranium mine in North America. And as far as can be determined, Mr. Speaker, no other province has established a separate program to locate, evaluate and

remedy problems with abandoned mines.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, the program this government established in early 1988 has already completed an initial survey of abandoned coal-mines in the southern part of the province and has completed remedial work on three dozen of the priority sites.

In uranium regulation, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is responsible for regulating the largest industry in the world. And the department has responded by establishing a regulatory program that is capable of providing a degree of environmental protection at uranium mines that is as good or better than any other regulatory program world-wide.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to touch a little bit on Saskatchewan Water Corporation. The corporation, established by this PC government, is the first and only corporation of its kind in North America established to deal specifically with water management. Sask Water, Mr. Speaker, has the largest pressurized pipeline irrigation development project presently under construction in Canada, at Luck Lake. And also at Luck Lake, Mr. Speaker, Sask Water is co-operating with Ducks Unlimited to develop their most critical intensive water wetlands project ever undertaken, Mr. Speaker.

(1545)

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken for almost 10 minutes, posting areas where the province is a leader in environment and protection alone. Those kinds of initiatives are direct proof of our commitment to the protection of our province's environment.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I see another \$22 million allocated to initiatives that will preserve and enhance the environment, initiatives like the blue box pilot project, collecting more recycled waste, to the soil conservation agreement with the federal government, the commitment to help and develop environmentally safe biopesticides and the taxing of environmentally harmful products — when I see these initiatives, Mr. Speaker, I know that our government will indeed keep environmental concerns as a constant priority in all decision making processes. And because of that, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support my colleague, the member from Nipawin, in his motion commending the government for its proven record in environmental concerns.

And, Mr. Speaker, it bothers me just a little bit when I hear the members from opposite talking about the Rafferty-Alameda dam. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has done no wrong. Saskatchewan lived up to every regulation and rule laid down by the federal government and all governments concerned, and we have nothing to hide, Mr. Speaker.

And when we hear the member opposite, from Rosemont, saying he's proud to have the Deputy House Leader, the environmental critic, the same person that buried 22,000 litres of PCBs and never said a word about it . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Covered them up.

**Mr. Britton:** — . . . covered them up, I say, Mr. Speaker, when we're talking about hypocrisy, that's the ultimate. That is like putting the fox to look after the chickens.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm not here to point fingers, but I am here to defend this government, Mr. Speaker. We have lived by every rule that was laid down by the federal government. The federal government gave us a licence. Now what I would like to point out to the members opposite today, Mr. Speaker, why I'm pleased to stand here, it is because the very fact that the government could rescind the licence proves that environment is a major issue and Saskatchewan is prepared to live by those rules.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for your attention. I have a few more things I'd like to say, Mr. Speaker. I think, Mr. Speaker, it's time that I made a mention of a thing. I would like to . . . I'd like to find . . . I'd like to know where the new morality of the members opposite come from. They are standing in their seat, Mr. Speaker, and they're telling us that we were dishonest, we hid things, and it wasn't too long ago, Mr. Speaker, when they were burying PCBs which was life-threatening, life-threatening, Mr. Speaker. They covered that up and, Mr. Speaker, I just can't believe what I hear when they stand up and criticize us when we have, as I pointed out, Mr. Speaker, the best records in the world. Many of these programs are world-wide . . .

**The Speaker:** — Time has elapsed.

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to participate in this debate this afternoon. In particular, I rise, Mr. Speaker, to support the amendments that my colleague, the member from Regina North East, moved, which read:

That all the words after the word "Assembly" be deleted, and the following substituted therefor:

regrets that the Government of Saskatchewan has failed to develop effective measures to protect the environment, has failed to adhere to existing environmental protection laws and procedures, and has also failed to propose a comprehensive strategy for sustainable economic development.

Mr. Speaker, the government opposite is the Keystone cops of government in this country. They talk about the environment, yet we see the problems at the NewGrade upgrader. They talk about protecting the environment, yet we see the recent announcement by the federal government in the federal court rejecting the federal licence which has authorized them to proceed on the Rafferty-Alameda dam project. And, Mr. Speaker, it would be laughable if it wasn't so serious with respect to the impact to the environment in our province.

We have seen, Mr. Speaker, in the northern part of the province, a uranium spill at Key Lake. And what have they done? They stand up in this House, the Keystone cops of government in this country, and they issue a resolution saying what a wonderful job they're doing with the environment. Mr. Speaker, it's absolutely incredible what they are doing in every area of government, but it's . . .



**Mr. Speaker:** — Time has elapsed.

## MOTIONS

### Resolution No. 1 — Support for the Agricultural Community

**Mr. Upshall:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today . . . I will be at the end of my remarks moving a motion along these lines:

That this Assembly condemn the Government of Saskatchewan for its failure — its failure — to protect farm families and the rural communities which are suffering from short-sighted, inadequate federal-provincial agricultural policies, and from the combined effects of drought, low commodity prices, and high debt load.

Mr. Speaker, this government, as we have seen in the past, talks a lot, talks a lot about nothing. If they were sincere, Mr. Speaker, in confronting the problem facing agriculture, they would have made agriculture the number one priority in this session of this legislature.

But what have we seen out of this government as far as initiative is concerned, about talking about the real issue of the crisis, the debt, the lack of income? In general, what have we seen this government propose to have predictable programs in agriculture? Absolutely nothing.

They have a motion on the blues about interest rates, where they are going to be the people who are going to change the interest rates, go to Ottawa. Well what happened when the Premier went down to Ottawa? The interest rates kept climbing up. They put the motion on the blues and they do not bring it forward, Mr. Speaker, and I ask: why? Why won't they come forward and debate the issue of high interest rates as it is affecting the farmers of this province?

Mr. Speaker, if I had a debt of \$200,000 as a farmer, and in the last year that interest rate rose about four points, about 4 per cent, that would increase my debt load by roughly \$8,000 per year — increase my debt. And yet the government thinks it's fine enough to put a motion on the order paper and let it sit there and they are unwilling, Mr. Speaker, to debate it.

And I say they are unwilling to debate it because they have nothing to offer to the rural people and the farmers of this province. They know that they cannot come out of the problem we're facing in any good political terms. So what are they doing? They're running and hiding. Well they can run, Mr. Speaker, but they cannot hide. Because the people, the farmers and the rural people of this province, are telling me that this government is not footing the bill, mainly because they have no predictability in their programs. They are saying, if I'm going to be offered something from the federal treasury, or the provincial treasury, just let me know so I can budget on that; if I'm not going to be offered anything, just let me know so I can budget on that.

But what happens is this government continually puts out

programs. In the long term . . . mind you, the long term for this government — I'll put that in context, is probably three or four days, in their long term of three or four days, and continually change that program. So they have a motion on interest rates that's costing this province. If you want to put it in grand terms, Mr. Speaker, on a \$6 billion debt in Saskatchewan, an interest rate increase of 4 per cent computes to roughly \$240 million a year that farmers are paying extra because this government and the federal government in Ottawa is not willing to attack the problem. The federal government in Ottawa claims it's because they're controlling inflation in Ontario.

What's the result in western Canada? We're seeing higher debt to the farmers of this province — to the tune of \$240 million a year. That's the problem, and they are unwilling to confront it.

Another question I ask about this government: if their priority is agriculture, which we definitely haven't seen, why did they not come forward with Bill 1 as the Bill that helps farmers restructuring their debt? In their great budget speech, on page 11, I believe, there is a statement there that they're going to restructure farm debt. Well I haven't seen it.

Last year, when Bill 37 came forward, during that Bill the ministers were saying, there's going to be follow-up legislation shortly to help farmers. Well we're over a year, almost a year later and all we have is another announcement in the budget that maybe something's coming. Why wasn't that legislation Bill 1, so we could let farmers know exactly if they're going to get any restructuring program; let farmers know if they're going to be able to keep their home quarter; let them know the rules of the game. That's what farmers are asking.

If I'm a farmer out in Saskatchewan, which I am, and if I have a debt to the agricultural credit corporation and I have a debt to my suppliers and also to the banks, I have to know so that I can tell my banker if I'm going to have any extra cash left over that's going to restructuring in ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan). I have to know so I tell my suppliers. But no, this government does not come forward with its first Bill to put forward a program that would help agriculture. We have yet to see it.

But what is the first Bill? The first Bill is this government's head-over-heels compassionate relationship with the large private corporations, so they bring forward privatization. That's their agenda. Their agenda is to privatize, and the result of privatization, rather than working on agriculture, bringing forward as Bill 1, their agenda is to work on privatization, so who benefits? How many farmers out in rural Saskatchewan, about half of them with a severe debt crisis, 60 per cent of them, in looking down the road cannot see that things are going to be very good?

How many of those people are going to be publicly participating in the government's privatization scheme? Who will benefit? is the question I ask the people of this province. And who will benefit? I ask the members across the way. I know who will benefit. It's their large corporate friends again who are going to benefit, as we saw with

PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company), as we saw with Saskoil and Sask Minerals.

And I ask the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, if they think they will benefit from privatization. And I think the answer is no, especially the rural people who, in the towns, depend on agriculture, and on the farms depend on agriculture; and in the towns, the small businesses, and on the farms, the farmers have large debt. They will not be able to afford it — any program; it doesn't matter what it is.

But here's the other side of the coin, Mr. Speaker. They won't be able to participate in the program, and all the while the efforts of this government to privatize some of our corporations, some of our profitable corporations, is taking money out of the provincial treasury that could be used to put back into those rural communities and those farms. Not only are they losing not being able to participate, they're also losing because this province will lose money because they're giving it to the private interest . . . to their private corporate friends. So there's a double whammy here. And that's the initiative of this government — put forward their own political agenda, but who will it benefit?

It won't benefit the ordinary people of this province. It benefits only a select few who are going to reap money coming from the resources of this province that should be held for the people of this province to lower their taxes, to lower their debt. But no, they give it away.

(1600)

And I will just use one more example, Mr. Speaker, as to where this government's priorities are. Today, for example, the government on its private members' day puts forward their initiative, the topic they want to speak on, the motion that they want to debate. And, Mr. Speaker, do you know what that motion is? They want to debate NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) on private members' day. With the great defender of the family farm, with all their back-bencher rural members, they want to debate NATO. They don't want to debate the problems in rural Saskatchewan, of farm families losing their farms, of stress and crisis out there.

And yet they're saying they're the defender of rural Saskatchewan. How hypocritical, Mr. Speaker, and I will not stand here and let that pass.

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

**Mr. Upshall:** — So they won't come forward with any debate on the crisis in rural Saskatchewan, the crisis in the economy of Saskatchewan. And that is why we are debating this motion today. We have to do something and we are continually trying to do something. As the farmers in rural Saskatchewan are telling me, why isn't anything being done to restructure the debt?

And that's why this motion is in there, Mr. Speaker, condemning this government for failing to protect family farms because of drought, low commodity prices and high debt loads. That's why this motion is here today. That's the emphasis that we on this side of the House

know has to be placed in the priority list of this government and this province; the priority list of agriculture and small business being right at the top. Because that is going to be the sector that has been and will continue to be the prime sector of making sure that this economy flourishes. But this government will not debate it. This government will not debate it.

And I ask the member for Rosthern, how many times has he talked about a program to restructure the debt in Saskatchewan. I can go back in the *Hansard*, and I will tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that not once has he addressed the crisis of the debt.

The members over there, and the member for Rosthern, will talk about everything else around the issue — they'll talk about how they're going to have a program to . . . In fact, what they do is they'll go through their little book, their little handbook on agriculture, and they'll say, we have the farm purchase program. Here it is, farm purchase program. In it . . . where is the farm purchase program? They're still talking about the farm purchase program, but they cut it out. So there's no vehicle right now to transfer land, no assistance for young farmers to get in agriculture.

If they're serious, bring forward the Bill. Let us know how you're going to do it. At least debate it with your speeches. They had the throne speech and the budget speech to debate it.

What else is there in this little book, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The production loan program; the production loan program, which I think is one of the biggest thorns in the side of this province, simply because it was a politically motivated program. They knew there was a need for cash, but instead of addressing it and structuring that need to help the needs of farmers, they've added a billion dollars debt.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. All members will get an opportunity . . . get their opportunity to get into the debate. I'd ask you to allow the member from Humboldt to make his point.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can understand why the members opposite get a little irritated when we tell the truth on this side of the House.

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

**Mr. Upshall:** — Because the truth is, they will not address the real issue out there. They have no predictability in their programs. They're continually tinkering. They have no influence or they . . . Here's another little irony. When any money comes out of Ottawa, the Premier of this province and the back benchers behind him will say, well, we did it again for the people of Saskatchewan, for any federal money coming out.

But whenever there's a lack of a program, whenever interest rates are climbing up, or whatever else is happening federally, well, you know, it's a federal problem and we can't do anything about it. I mean, do they really think the people of this province believe that kind of nonsense? The people of this province know the

political agenda behind here, and that is to fleece everybody in this province except Tories and Tory friends. That's the agenda.

I mentioned the production loan program, adding \$1.2 billion of debt on Saskatchewan farmers. And I agree that in certain circumstances that money was used wisely. In certain circumstances that money was absolutely necessary, but the method by which they put out that program — politically motivated — addressed to meet the needs of the political Tory government instead of meeting the needs of Saskatchewan farmers. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, why did they not take that amount of money or a lesser amount, probably half of that, and reduce the existing debt to the farmers of Saskatchewan, restructure their existing debt if they wanted to have a subsidized program? That would have allowed farmers to free up some of their capital that they're now using to pay that existing debt so that they could get an operating loan this spring. But they don't operate that way because that wasn't the political motive. The motive was to help the government more than it helped the farmers.

And if you want to carry on, Mr. Speaker, I've already mentioned the farm purchase program which they implemented for a short period of time to again win an election, and then dropped it. Then there's the livestock cash advance that they continue to talk about. Well, the livestock prices right now are less than they were a year ago, and the livestock industry, especially the beef industry, has come through many years of low prices.

But last year what did they do? They reduced the livestock cash advance program by 70 per cent . . . by 30 per cent rather, and asked farmers to pay that back. Did they think of the fact that there was a drought last year, that farmers needed money to move their cattle to pasture, move them back, buy feed and get water, haul water to cattle or cattle to water? Did they think about the prices going down? No, all they thought about was, well, we need some of this money back so we're going to ask for 30 per cent of it back. I ask you the logic in that.

A drought affecting the livestock where the farmers need more money, a drought affecting the crops where the farmers knew their income was going to be down, and yet this sensitive, Tory, compassionate government, the government of the farmers, is asking for money back, money that farmers could not afford to give back.

Oh, many of them paid it back, sure, but I'll tell you why they paid it back. It's the same thing with the production loan program. I'll tell you, the farmers that I've talked to are telling me one thing. Because of the way this government operates they are going to pay back, get out from under them as quick as they can, because they see the ACS actions coming. They see the predicted 1,500 actions this year, or 2,000, or who knows what the number will be, so they're scared to get tangled up with this government, this government and their hassle-free cash a couple of years ago, as they were saying.

Isn't that quite a way to operate a government. This is the signal that tells me that the farmers out there have figured them out. They know who they can trust, and they know who they can't trust. And isn't it unfortunate when an

economy in Saskatchewan based on agriculture and small business, that they can't trust the government to help them out. They're trying to get out from under them.

Mr. Speaker, there is a number of programs that this government has brought forward and have either reduced, they've tinkered with them, or they've wiped them right out. And there's not many programs left. And the point I'm making here is that the dollars put out to rural Saskatchewan, it's not that they're not appreciated, it's not that any government hasn't got the responsibility to put that money out there, Mr. Speaker, but the problem is that they're continually tinkering with the programs. If there's a political agenda to be met, it doesn't matter what the program is, it will be changed to meet that agenda, and a farmer in Saskatchewan and the suppliers and the small-business people in rural Saskatchewan cannot operate under those rules. And that's the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move now to further show why we brought forward . . . why I put this motion in, condemning the government's failure to protect family farms and rural communities by their short-sighted policies, and from the combined effects of drought, low commodity prices, and debt.

In this year's budget, just a week or so ago, if you combine the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Rural Development, you will see first of all in the budget that the total agricultural budget for Saskatchewan, if you look just in the budget, it's about the same as it was, or I believe there's a slight increase . . . a slight decrease, but it was very close.

But when you go into the *Supplementary Estimates* for 1988 and you add up in Agriculture and Rural Development, when you add up the fact . . . when you add up 35 million — three and a half million; and in Rural Development it comes to about another . . . there's 15 and a half, 16 million. When you add all that up, what you find is there's actually a decrease in this budget of nearly \$50 million in those two departments.

And that is why we have to put motions like this for the record. When you try to tell people that you're not cooking the books . . . oh, and sure, I grant them the fact that more money could be spent, but I'll be waiting to see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be waiting to see. But in fact, as it stands right now, there's a \$50 million decrease in the budgets to Agriculture and Food, and Rural Development.

**An Hon. Member:** — They need a billion at Rafferty.

**Mr. Upshall:** — That's right. My colleague from Elphinstone says they need a billion at Rafferty. And that too, in combination with what's happening in the rest of Saskatchewan, is the very reason that we have to bring forward a motion like this. Because what's happening . . . and I'll just stray for a minute, Mr. Speaker, into a constituency like Estevan, the Premier's riding.

You ask yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and members opposite, why is the emphasis being put on this Rafferty-Alameda project? Well I'll tell you why: because the Premier happens to be the MLA for Estevan. And I

don't know how the back-benchers can sit back and let the people of this province fire at them like they're firing at them over the Rafferty-Alameda project just to save the member from Estevan, just so he can have some people working in his constituency. And they have all their reasons, but if I was a back-bencher I'd start to be scratching my head and saying, just a minute here; is this the preservation fund for the MLA for Estevan, or is this in fact something that's going to be good for the whole province? And I wouldn't doubt that some of the members back there are already scratching their head. If they're not, they certainly should be.

Because we see through the whole process of this Rafferty-Alameda project, the Premier of this province, the member for Estevan, who also, Mr. Speaker, if you want me to relate this to the motion, is the Minister of Agriculture — I wonder why the farm groups in this province can't get a hold of him. I wonder why he's inaccessible. I know why — because he's down making sure that he's going to get re-elected in Estevan instead of looking after the people of this province.

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

**Mr. Upshall:** — What have we come to? Going through the motions of pretending they're the friend of the family farm, but yet there's the other agenda. And I'll bet you a dollar to a doughnut, as long as I'm standing here, that the Premier of this province will continue to push that project down there for all he's worth, whether it's legal, whether it's illegal, whether he has studies or not, because he, in combination with his Tory friends in Ottawa, will assure — because it's the buddy system — will assure his own re-election. And that is why we have to bring motions here to try to debate, to try to ask the other members in this House to debate these issues of agriculture.

They're so caught up in privatization, profiting only a few. They're so caught up in the preservation of the Premier and the MLA for Estevan, benefitting only very few, that they are not talking about the real issue of the debt problem, the problem of restructuring the debt in this province.

(1615)

Mr. Speaker, there is a crisis out there, and I don't like to say that, but the facts are that there is a crisis in rural Saskatchewan, in the towns and on the farms, and it's flowing over into the whole economy of the province.

What did the Government of Saskatchewan do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to ensure the farmers received the drought program promised by the federal government? What have they done to ensure that drought program?

I believe that I know the reason why the delay has been so long in the drought program. I think the reason is because before the federal election of 1988, I believe there was a commitment made from the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture of the province of Saskatchewan, saying that he would kick in some money to assist the program, saying that he would administer the program. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you know what? I think he's even ratting on his Tory friends in Ottawa on this one.

I think he's welshing on a deal, and he's doing that because he can't keep the economy of this province rolling because he has no money left because he's spending it on other things like the patronage. He's spending it on things like patronage and waste and mismanagement, and he's not getting it in because he's giving away any revenue-generating corporations that's owned by the people of this province.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that's the why this drought payment . . . one of the reasons why this drought payment has been so long. The two Tory governments in Ottawa, both in debt, both struggling to find money somewhere are using the people of this province. They're using them by not delivering on their promises. They're betraying them.

And I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what more could a farmer do right now when he has his back up against the wall, short of revolt, when he was promised a payment, and these payments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are an investment in that farmer's farm? It's not a hand-out, it's not a gift, it's an investment to ensure that he is going to be able to continue farming this year.

But because we don't have that payment that was promised during the federal election — they said it would be out in early January — the Premier of this province is not holding up his end of the bargain, therefore delaying the process even further. And now they're trying to negotiate to see how much he's going to put in. Those negotiations obviously aren't going very well because we still don't see the payment. Oh, it's on its way, it's on its way, a little bit of it.

But tell me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and members opposite, tell me how as I farm in rural Saskatchewan this spring and I walk into my financial institution and I say, I need money for operating, and they say, I'm sorry, you are no longer a good risk — where do I turn?

In essence, this government is denying, and the Tory government in Ottawa is denying, possibly denying some farmers the right to farm their own land by not being able to put their crop in this year.

That's why they don't get up over there and talk about the crisis because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I didn't think I'd ever hear myself say this, but I don't think any member opposite, rural or urban, care about what's happening out there. And that's hard for me to say because I'm a fellow rural member and I care. But by looking at all the process that we've gone through here, I don't know whether they care. If they cared, why aren't they putting pressure on their Premier to say, look, we have to have this thing delivered. And it's not being delivered.

All the while, when farmers are struggling for cash, when their incomes are down and the two Tory governments, in Ottawa and Regina, led by the Premier of this province, can't get their act together to deliver a predictable program that farmers will know at the end — we don't even now know what the end result is going to be, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Isn't that terrible when some money should have been in the hands of the farmer already, and yet the farmers don't know the final outline of the program? How am I this spring, or any other farmer in Saskatchewan, how am I supposed to budget for the following spring and summer? How do I budget, when it would be very easy for this government here and in Ottawa to put out a predictable program that would let me know exactly what was happening?

And like I said before, farmers are saying: tell me what I'm going to get; if it's nothing, tell me nothing; if it's something, tell me what the number is; that's all I want to know.

But the Premier of this province does know something. He knows that there's an election coming up sooner or later in this province.

And I just want to talk for a minute, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture. I've talked earlier about his concerns, where they lie. He is now spending \$9 million on a birthday party — \$9 million of Saskatchewan taxpayers' money on a birthday party. And oh, he says, it's going to be promoting Saskatchewan and all the activities and everything — tourism and all that kind of stuff. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that that's the guise they're going to put it under.

But instead of spending money on agriculture to help reduce interest or help farmers become viable, they're spending money on a \$9 million birthday party. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe — if I were guessing, and I don't think I'm guessing too far wrong — that the majority of that \$9 million will be spent in the six months prior to the next provincial election, possibly in the Premier's riding. But I'll bet you the majority is spent six months prior to the next provincial election on advertising promoting government.

Isn't that quite a little picture. We have farmers in this province leaving the land, people exodus-ing, and the government is more concerned about self-preservation. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I talk to the people of rural Saskatchewan, they say the only way that they would agree to spending \$9 million, if it was a farewell party, because it would be the best money they ever invested. And I believe they're true — a farewell party for the Tory government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to turn for a minute to the livestock industry, and I touched briefly on it earlier. In Saskatchewan, the livestock people are now changing . . . or having a program changed to the national tripartite. Stabilization has changed to tripartite . . . changing. We have to ensure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Premier has to ensure that there are a couple of components of that agreement that have to be changed.

Number one, it has to be an orderly marketing . . . single-desk marketing rather, a single-desk marketing agency. And secondly, it has to be a cost of production formula instead of the backward averaging formula. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they should know that the averaging formula does not work, because when western grain stabilization began they had the same type of formula,

and it didn't work then so they had to change the program. And now they're saying, well we're going to have the averaging formula. Just because they don't have the political will to do it right, just because they're falling in line with the federal government again — a half-baked program.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the beef industry under this tripartite program, we're assuming that every province is going to come into this program on an equal footing. Well I'll tell you, that is ludicrous. We have to ensure in any program that we know what the rules are, so that we can ensure an increasing number of cattle in our industry, because that's what's going to put dollars in the pockets of farmers. But this tripartite program does not do that. Oh it will cost the farmer less, but they are also going to receive less. As I said, the cash advance is cut back.

Another component of the cash advance program I'd like to touch briefly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the fact that the government is now doing a complete audit. They're going out and counting farmers' cows because they found out that there was a number of farmers who took the cash advance, and when they spot checked them, that they didn't have the cattle there to match that.

Well that's one of the problems that does come into this program, and you have to police that. And I agree to that. But what I don't agree to is a complete audit being done by this government and charging the farmers to do it. What they're saying is, we used to trust you but now we don't trust you any more.

So they're taxing the farmer again. They're charging a service fee just like they're starting to do in all the ag credit corporation business. They're starting to transfer the cost that was in the past carried by ACS. They're transferring those little service fees — and it's not great big amounts of money — to each farmer. But the point is it's transferring, it's taxing the people, the farmers of this province, where they shouldn't be taxed, and especially in the counting of the cattle under the livestock cash advance program. Because they're saying, I'm guilty and I got to prove myself innocent. And I don't think the farmers out there like that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to talk for just a minute now about the out-migration of people in this province and how it is affected and why it ties into this motion. We see in rural Saskatchewan, because this government's failure to implement programs that help the rural people, that we're losing businesses; we're losing families off the farm; we're losing families in town, just to the tune, Mr. Deputy Speaker, last year of about 16,000 people, and in February, this month, over 6,000 people. And they're leaving because this government does not have a plan. But then, just a minute, maybe I'm wrong — maybe they do have a plan.

Why wouldn't the government when they see an exodus of that number of people — a net outward migration of that amount of people — why would they not be trying to stop that? And I think part of the reason is because the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture, still maintains today what he has said and written a number of years back, that there are a number of people, farmers in this province,

who are inefficient and should go. And he's delivering on that promise. That's the only promise that I wish he wouldn't have kept, but he's delivering on that one.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the out-migration of the people of this province is tearing the economy — tearing down the economy, tearing down the lives, tearing down the rural communities to such a point where I ask this question. With all the programs that this government said it has, the great, wondrous programs to help this province — privatization, lack of help for the agriculture industry, concentrating on birthday parties for self-preservation, concentrating on getting the Premier elected in Estevan — I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, while all this is going on and the economy is falling down around them, the question to be asked, and the question for the people of this province to ask is, what will be left?

What will be left when these people are finished with our economy? There will be a few rich Tories around, maybe, but they'll probably be gone by then too. That's the question. In the whole scheme of things, whether we talk about education or health or small business or agriculture or anything else, what will be left for our children to look forward to when this Tory government is done? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't think there's going to be much left.

Therefore, in order to take one more step in the removal of these people from office, I will end this debate by moving the motion, seconded by the member for Quill Lakes:

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for its failure to protect farm families and rural communities which are suffering from short-sighted and inadequate federal and provincial agriculture policies, and from the combined effects of drought, low commodity prices, and high debt loads.

I so move.

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

(1630)

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm very pleased to join and to second the motion from the member from Humboldt because certainly if there's any one single problem that this legislature should be dealing with, it's the crisis in agriculture. And this government does not even have the courage nor the conviction to come forward here and to debate the major crisis in this province.

Let us take a look at the magnitude of the problem that is confronting the people of Saskatchewan today. And we are now in day 23, and this government has absolutely refused to address one single question on agriculture. And they have refused to bring forward any legislation or any programs that they have mentioned in the budget debate and speech.

Let's take a look, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the seriousness of the situation. In their own document, which they went around Saskatchewan and had hearings with the people

and the farmers — it's called the *Farm Finance for the Future: M.L.A. Committee Report* — and I want to quote out of there as to the magnitude of the problem. Because it said:

A recent Angus Reid opinion poll indicated that over a quarter of Saskatchewan farmers do not believe they will be in agriculture in three years.

That was in 1987. One-quarter of the farmers were saying, when surveyed, that under those circumstances they would not be farming.

And last year we had one of the major droughts that has hit this province since the last time that we had a Tory government here in Saskatchewan, back in 1929, the Anderson government. We had a drought then too. But the Angus Reid poll says that one-third of the farmers are saying they are unable to stay on the farm because of the crisis.

We've had a major, major drought. And this government, this is the report they brought to this legislature in 1987, and not one step has been taken to alleviate the situation which has been increased in intensity by the drought.

Let's take a look at how serious the situation is. Today farmers are under the heavy burden of \$6.5 billion of debt. Interest rates are on the increase, increasing the burden. And what does this government do? They absolutely refuse to join with the members on this side of the House to urge the federal government to cut back on the high interest rate policy.

How bad is the problem? Let's take a look at a further quote from their report. It says:

However, the one-third of the farmers currently holding three-quarters of the debt may not have the resources to continue farming.

That's in 1987. That's the statistics they brought back to this House, that one-third. That means that about 20,000 farmers are on the verge or have been already driven from the farm, from the land.

And what do we have this government doing? Well this government, in addressing the debt load, the high interest rate they refuse to act on . . . But what they have done is, oh, during an election they had a \$1.2 billion for a production loan. And now when the farmers had had the worst drought that has hit this province since the Dirty Thirties under the Anderson government, what they have done is commence action against the farmers.

Both federal and provincial Tory governments, their statistics indicate that in 1981-82, when they first took over, 196 were driven off — foreclosure; '82-83, 282; '83-84, 380; 1985, 502; 1986, 358 — there was a drop; in 1987, 976 foreclosures. And do you know what you find? The Minister of Agriculture of this province in 1988 commenced over 600 actions against farmers in respect to ACS, the Agricultural Corporation of Saskatchewan — over 600.

And now he has turned over actions against another

2,000 farmers in Saskatchewan. That's the agricultural policy that we've been getting from the members opposite, and they stand up and try to say they're the friend of the farmer. Well I'll tell you, the farmers don't believe you any more. You have gone to the trough once too often.

You have deceived them, and the last one that broke the trust that the farmers had, any trust in you whatsoever, was the broken promise in respect to the drought payment. Here the Premier and the provincial members, along with the federal Tories during the last federal election, indicated to the farmers across this province that they would get a drought payment over 400-and-some million dollars in Saskatchewan, that that payment would be made in the early part of the new year.

And now what have they done? The Premier of this province, the Minister of Agriculture, has refused, has reneged on his agreement to help finance the drought payment. He has refused to participate, which he said he would, and as a result we have the federal government holding back a portion of the payment. On the back of the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture, is the responsibility for the hold-back in the drought payment because he refused to participate, which he indicated during the federal fall election, federal election, that he would.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the farmers of Saskatchewan will not be deceived by this outfit again. In 1985, when we went across southern Saskatchewan, when there was only eight of us in this legislature, we went across southern Saskatchewan to help the drought-ridden farmers of southern Saskatchewan, and we talked to them and we told them to organize to get results.

And at Bengough there's 1,500 farmers packed the arena asking for action. And in Swift Current another 2,000 people with trucks and tractors soliciting, asking for the government to come to their assistance. But that was initiated by members over on this side working with the farmers and telling them to go to the meeting and demand — to demand action from the government. And I'll tell you, we got action.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — And I'm saying, and I'm putting a challenge to the farmers of Saskatchewan today: join with us again and we'll get action for you. We'll throw these birds out of office and get a decent government to take over and have an agricultural policy that will protect the family farms. That's what we'll have.

You know, today the farmers have been coming to this government. There's been various groups that have come in. There's a group that came to meet with the Premier and representative members of the government, the Christian Farm Crisis Action Committee. This is a committee that stemmed from the original meeting of the Catholic bishops out in my constituency at St. Peter's College, saying that we as a society must defend a way of life, the family farm. This is what the Catholic bishops were saying. And they've set up a committee within the committee. They come forward with a number of

recommendations.

And they've asked this government to do a couple of things. They asked the government if they would consider, in light of the drought, in light of the heavy debt, in light of what we've experienced in lower prices and commodities, to give the farmers a breathing space; just to give them an opportunity to see whether the drought ends, which it may well; give them an opportunity to have one good crop at a half-decent price.

Because in 1966, I referred to the number of foreclosures, and it was down. And Farm Credit Corporation at that time did put a moratorium on foreclosures. And it went down. And what I'm saying here is the group that was acting on behalf of the Catholic bishops, the Christian Farm Crisis Action Committee, they're asking this government, would you consider putting on a moratorium just to give us a breathing space.

These are the reasons why. The federal government, in our view, broke a promise and deceived us. That's what the farmers are telling us. We totally depended on getting a drought payment in the first part of the year, and the entire amount of the drought payment. And many of them banked on it, and they were going to be able to use that drought payment if they got it in this first part of the year, in one payment, to use that in putting in a crop.

But do you realize the crisis that is out there? And people sit here and we are not taking action. Farmer after farmer I have talked to who is not going to be able to have the operating money to put his crop in. Operating loans have been cut off. You must be out in your agricultural community. The member from Arm River is a farmer and a man that talks to them. Surely you know that there are farmers out there that have no operating money to put in the crop.

And what I am saying is: do you know what the Christian Farm Crisis Action Committee asks? They asked this government: if you won't do anything in helping to restructure debt, which I think they should be, half of the \$6.5 billion of debt is held by the provincial and federal government, and they can act. But I'll tell you, they don't care about the farmers. That's the truth of the matter.

**An Hon. Member:** — They're foreclosing on them.

**Mr. Koskie:** — They're foreclosing on them, that's right.

And if you want policy, Mr. Member from Arm River, and I ask you: if you've met with the group, the Christian Farm Crisis Action group, why don't you take into account, why don't you come into this legislature and at least debate it; why won't you put on a moratorium for a year, which they're asking for; why don't you stand up for the farmers instead of for the banks? That's what the farmers are asking.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Stand up for the farmers and not for the banks. That's what they're saying. Give farmers an opportunity to survive.

Mr. Speaker, it's a sad day that history would repeat itself. We have followed the history of the Tory party, and it was over 50 years that we were without Tories, and this province prospered. The last time we had a Tory government was back in 1929 to '34 or '35 — the Anderson government. And I'll tell you, an expression grew at that time that Tory times were tough times. And I'll tell you, history is repeating itself. And that Tory government didn't care about people. They associated themselves with reactionaries and right wingists in society, and they actually marched around this province supported by the Ku Klux Klan. That's what they did in 1929.

And I'm going to prove to you, Mr. Speaker, that that group in 1929, that history repeats itself, and how can we expect them to act on behalf of the people of this province. Do you know what? I'm quoting here from *Denny: The Family History*, and on page 41 I want to indicate, and I'm going to relate it to this resolution, Mr. Speaker, so let me go ahead:

(1645)

The year 1929 was also marked by an election of the Anderson government in Saskatchewan, an anti-French government. In 1930 when the strategies of the Anderson government made it quite evident that an all-out attack would be launched against Catholic schools, at the first session of the Anderson government The School Act was amended in such a way that it prohibited the presence of the crucifix in the public schools. It also prohibited the wearing of the religious costumes in the class-rooms by religious people.

That was those worthy characteristics of a right-wing Tory government in 1929. They associated with the Ku Klux Klan. They didn't bring in policies for the people in Saskatchewan. They ran at the Catholic schools, they ran at the French, and that's what we have here today. We have the agricultural community bleeding. And do you know where the Tory party is going again? They are going back to the Ku Klux Klan.

I read here, and one would hardly believe, that history again would come back to repeat itself with the association with the Ku Klux Klan. And this is in Alberta, the Tory party is tied in with the Ku Klux Klan again: "Filmon criticized for KKK incident." And here it says, and I want to quote just a little portion of it. McDonald, a spokesman for the Manitoba Intercultural Council said:

Filmon should have admonished Highway's minister, Albert Driedger, for shaking hands with the demonstrators last week in Gladstone, Manitoba, and saying later he saw nothing wrong with them wearing pointed white hoods and carrying torches.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — And I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan better be aware because what we have here is the reincarnation of the 1929 Tory party, the association with the Ku Klux Klan. It's in Manitoba; it'll be

here. I predict it'll be here, and the people of Saskatchewan will be the ones that suffer. Just imagine, tied up with the Ku Klux Klan.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order order. We are debating a motion on agriculture policies in Saskatchewan, and I'm sure the hon. member does realize he's kind of drawing a long bow. Kind of drawing a long bow.

Order, order, order. Order, order. So the motion here, of which he is quite aware, is about agricultural policies in Saskatchewan. The point I'm making to the hon. member that his remarks should relate to that. His remarks should relate to that.

**Mr. Koskie:** — What I'm demonstrating here is there is no agricultural policy. And I'm demonstrating to this legislature and to the people of Saskatchewan, the reason that we don't have a policy for people is that we have a government here, and its history was tied to a right-wing Ku Klux Klan, that ideology of 1929. And today what we have is a Tory movement across this country again associating with the Ku Klux Klan. And I say to the farmers of Saskatchewan, how can you expect, how can you expect to get fair treatment from a group that is tied to a reactionary, right-wing, murdering group of Ku Klux Klan? That's what we have as a government.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — I think this . . . I think members opposite should be ashamed of themselves. Here we have, in the budget, indication that they're going to bring forward a number of new farm finance initiatives. That's what they said. Here is a document which says agriculture, food, and the rural way of life. When do the people of Saskatchewan, the farmers, need these programs? At the whim and for the benefit of the members opposite? Or do they need them now? Well I think there's no doubt whatsoever that if these programs are going to be meaningful at all, then these programs have to be initiated and they should be debated here.

I challenge you. Why don't you get off your kick of the privatization? The minister here is . . . the first Bill he brought into this legislature was privatization . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, and then he wants to include it as a course in the curriculum — privatization.

And here in their own report they say that 11 per cent of the farmers are insolvent, 28 per cent are in serious financial circumstances. And another year has passed and they sit there and they don't even have the shame to bow their heads because they've deserted the farmers of this province, the like of which we have never seen since the last scourge that we had in this province was a Tory government in 1929 attached to the Ku Klux Klan.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — I'll tell you, and I'll challenge anyone of you, and I'll challenge the Premier — you bring in your legislation, bring in your programs, and we will sit extra hours in order to review them and to pass them. Twenty-three days have passed, and not a single Bill on agriculture, and we're losing farmers day after day.



But we're going to privatize. We're going to get rid of SaskPower, says the minister. That's more important than dealing with agriculture. These people here said, well we won't support your resolution urging the federal government to reduce their high interest rates because we're going to bring one in too, ourselves. And so their Deputy House Leader, or whatever the name they give to him, put one on the order paper.

And yesterday they indicated that we were going to go ahead and debate it, because we cannot — the farmers and the small-business men in rural Saskatchewan — cannot survive with the high interest rates. You're going to wipe out rural Saskatchewan if action isn't taken immediately. Absolutely wipe out Saskatchewan.

But that's what you want. Because really what you want to do, just as the Premier said when he was at the university — 80 per cent, he said, of the farmers were inefficient and should go. And boy, the Tory agenda is coming true, because that's what's happening.

And you know how they're going to help it on? They're going to set up an equity financing corporation — an equity financing corporation that was rejected across this province. And I defy any one of you to join in this debate and deny that that program was rejected, because it was rejected. It was rejected and you have no . . . in order to implement take-over of the farm land, because you don't believe in the family farm. You're going to set up an equity financing corporation.

And where are they going to bring in the money from? Well the Farm Credit Corporation officials said, there's lots of money over in Hong Kong. They will come in and buy this land; it's cheap. Europeans will come in and buy this land. And what we're going to do is end up with our farmers, not family farmers owning their land, but they're going to be tenant farmers. They're going to be share-croppers. They're going to have foreign ownership of the land. That's where we're heading, heading for the destruction of a way of life that was unique to Saskatchewan and which was cherished by the people of this province.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — No, it's absolutely . . . they stand there and will not bring in legislation, will not support us in respect to reducing interest rates. They won't put into effect what the recommendations of the committee formed as a result of the meeting of the Catholic bishops at Muenster. They sit back, but as they sit on their hands the casualties continue to grow.

And you see the headlines throughout the papers, Mr. Speaker, and they're a sad commentary to a society which we ran with decency and compassion in the past.

What we find now is headlines like this, "Farmers expect sheriff with eviction any time." Isn't that wonderful? Two thousand more applications to the lawyers to take legal actions against the farmers — two thousand more legal actions to be taken against the farmers. And you know who's initiating it is the Premier of this province, the

Minister of Agriculture. I say, shame. Read of the stress of families that has taken place in this province, "Farmers cave in to stress — staggering debt blamed."

And I'll tell you, during the federal election this government had no problem when they went . . . when Bill McKnight and Don Mazankowski wanted to have an opening of a Husky upgrader which the private sector would not in fact put much money up. Well I'll tell you, our Premier went down there just like that and he said, we've got to work together boys.

He put in 2 or \$300 million into an upgrader. And do you know what he says now? He says, I'm going to renege on the farmers; I'm not going to pay in my share on the drought payment. And as a result the farmers are not getting their full payment which they deserve and which were promised to them. And that's a breach of promise.

"Farmers cave in to stress." Have you read these? Do these stories not affect you? How do you take your pay and go home with no concern and respect to what's happening to decent families across this province. Farmers cave in to stress. Do you realize a lady ended up in court the other day, a decent human being — I believe from the Rosetown area — caught picking something up in the store. Decent all her life. She said she went off almost into a nervous breakdown because that day Farm Credit Corporation came and were seizing land which they had established for their son. And you know what? The court believed her, and gave her a total discharge in respect to the action that had been taken.

These are the stories of human crisis and misery that stands before us. And that minister stands in this House and says, privatization is more important than family farms, and family decency, and family future. That's what you're doing. And I'll tell you the farmers of Saskatchewan will join . . .

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

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

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Mr. Speaker, with leave, I'd like to introduce guests.

Leave is granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you'll see in your gallery, we have some visitors, and I believe they're all from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. And I would certainly like all members to welcome them here, but I would just like to explain to our visitors that we are — if the member from Quill Lakes would please indulge — I would like to welcome you. What is in the debate is a motion on agriculture, and it's both sides of the House going against one another. We all have our ideology as to how we feel things are ran and how they feel we don't run things as is, but with your indulgence, member from Quill Lakes, I would like you to join with all members of the House to welcome our visitors from Saskatoon.

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

**MOTIONS**

**Resolution No. 1 — Support for the Agricultural  
Community (continued)**

**Mr. Koskie:** — I wish the hon. member from wherever would have identified the group that he was introducing, but I take it he, again, doesn't know what he is talking about. But certainly I join with the House to welcome our guests.

But I know it hurts that the farmers of this province are turning against you; they're turning against you because you have deceived the farmers of this province, that's what you have done. You have deceived the farmers and you can't get off the hook. You promised them a drought payment . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order, order. It being 5 o'clock, the House now stands recessed until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.